WHY WE'RE ALL GOING ON A SUMMER HOLIDAY

The Role of the working-class organisations in the development of popular tourism, 1850-1950

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is concerned with the role played by workers and their organisations in the development and achievement of holidays and mass tourism. Starting with an overview which sets the scene, looking at the earliest travel by workers, the main body of the work covers the period from 1850 to 1950. This takes in the proto-package tours to the Great Exhibition; investigates ways and means used by workers to get a holiday before payment was received for the period of leave; examines campaigns by trade unions for holidays with pay; discusses the kind of accommodation provided for or demanded by working-class holidaymakers. Relevant legislation is also taken into account in the development process. Workers' independent contribution to the achievement of holidays and the means to enjoy them are traced from the beginnings of urban industrial society until the immediate post World War Two Period and the availability of paid holidays for the majority.

During the early stages of working-class history, before 1850, workers did not take time off to travel and stay away from home as a leisure activity, although some people travelled to search for work or migrated, usually due to

economic circumstances. As a process of change and development is being studied rather than an event static in time, shorter trips have relevance during the period from 1840 onwards when excursions clearly played a part in the initiation of workers into travel for pleasure. Day excursions were the precursors of longer trips. As these early developments are outside the main period of study yet of importance to the growth of holiday taking amongst workers, they have been included and discussed in order to set the context of the work and to provide the background for the starting point of the main discussion.

Primary source materials used in the research included minute books of local committees associated with the arrangements for the Great Exhibition, correspondence of these committees, hand bills and advertisements, trade union reports and correspondence with the Trades Union Congress, oral reminiscences, minutes of government commissions and select committees and official reports. I have also referred to numerous works on tourism, working-class culture, labour history, theories of leisure, social and economic history, contemporary newspaper reports and even fiction.

There is a paucity of original materials produced by workers themselves. Paradoxically, minutes and documents from the working-men's committees for the Great Exhibition are preserved but very few primary resources remain for the numerous, more recent holiday savings clubs. Perhaps this is because the Exhibition was seen as a special event worthy of commemoration whilst going-off clubs were just a part of "normal" life and therefore items relating to them

were disposable as artifacts. Ways and means of securing time-off work or a holiday away from home before paid leave was available are investigated and discussed.

The TUC's archive in the Modern Records Centre, at the University of Warwick has provided a valuable primary source of materials and information dating from the 1920s onwards. This and the minutes of the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, have been essential in the investigation of the campaign for paid leave in the first half of the twentieth century.

A suitable supply of accommodation in locations which would appeal to workers, be physically accessible to them and available at prices they could afford was a prerequisite of any growth in the scale of working-class tourism. A chapter is devoted to the discussion of holiday accommodation. Boarding houses, holiday camps, and beach huts are investigated, as are some of the organisations devoted to the provision of holidays for workers.

Socialists were ardent campaigners and supporters of the right to working people to enjoy holidays without the attendant worry of loss of earnings and potential destitution on the return home. Socialists were also keen that these holidays should be an edifying experience, based on fellowship and worthwhile activities, hence their involvement in pioneering holiday camps.

The labour movement became more politically influential after the First World War, through the Labour Party and trade union consultation by Governments. Campaigns for

holidays with pay could then effect change both within the collective bargaining structures and through Parliamentary legislation. Policy and planning by the labour movement during the period when paid holidays were becoming a reality not just an aspiration are discussed.

In conclusion, the thesis aims to demonstrate the social, cultural and political influence of working-class people and their organisations, in determining by their active involvement the growth and development of mass tourism, rather than through the passive consumption of a product offered for sale by entrepreneurs.

WHY WE'RE ALL GOING ON A SUMMER HOLIDAY

The role of working-class organisations in the development of popular tourism, 1850-1950

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is concerned with the role played by workers and their organisations in the development and achievement of holidays and mass tourism. Its purpose is to redress the current imbalance in research relating to the conscious efforts of working-class people to secure a holiday. Although research has looked at leisure and the working class, it has often focussed on theories of social control rather than on workers making choices based on their own culturally defined wants and perceived needs. Works relating specifically to tourism and holiday making, when discussing the working class, are more concerned with the effects of working-class tourism on the growth and development of resorts than with workers actively shaping this development through their own demands and cultural expression. Books studying tourism assign the role of passive consumers to working-class holidaymakers. In the last fifteen years or so there has been very little new discussion by historians on this theme and so an appraisal of relevant contributions to the discussion of leisure and holidaymaking for workers from previously published works

will be made in order to give an overview of the current state of research in this topic. I will try to expand on the work already undertaken to bring the study of tourism and the working class in England up to date. The question of the extent of workers' own involvement and the effect of their cultural needs and demands in the development of the tourism industry will be answered in the discourse that follows.

Starting with an overview to set the scene looking at the earliest travel by English workers, the main part of the work covers the century from 1850 to 1950. This takes in the proto-package tours to the Great Exhibition, investigates ways and means used by workers to get a holiday before payment for the "lost time" was received, takes in campaigns by trade unions for holidays with pay and examines the kind of accommodation provided for or demanded by working-class holidaymakers. Relevant legislation is also taken into account in the development process. The period covered is quite long but was chosen as it shows a process of change rather than a single event. Workers' independent contributions to the achievement of holidays and the means to enjoy them are traced from the beginnings of urban industrial society to the immediate post World War II period and holidays for the majority. The study concentrates on the efforts and initiatives of workers in urbanised England rather than in the whole of Great Britain and the rest of Europe. This is because of regional and cultural differences within Britain itself and with other nations, as well as the unevenness of industrial development. It has not been the intention to ignore the situation regarding the attitude to holidays in other countries. A look at the situation at the time of the Holidays with Pay Act in some other states is included for comparison in the

concluding chapter. Holidays, in the period before 1950, were very much an urban phenomenon. The nature of working in the rural environment, meant that it was difficult for agricultural workers to develop any means of providing for holidays or taking time off away from home so progress was slow for them.

The point of this work is not to investigate the activities of working-class people on holiday. This has been dealt with thoroughly by other historians, such as John Walton[1] and James Walvin[2]. Discussion will focus on how workers have managed to claim the right to blocks of time away from work, a period of leave during which the worker has autonomy and control over what is done in his or her own time. For this free time to be translated into leisure or holidays provision must be made to ensure no financial hardship occurs as a result of not being at work. The evolution is traced from community based holidays without official sanction from the employers, through holidays taken with the agreement of the employer but for which the workers themselves had financial responsibility, to breaks from work of a week or two during which the employee receives the normal remuneration. The type of accommodation available was also important. Not only had it to be appropriate to working-class tastes and lifestyle, ways had to be devised to make it affordable yet still provide a livelihood for the host or hostess and their employees.

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[1] John K Walton, The English Seaside Resort - a Social History 1750 - 1914, 1983; J K Walton and James Walvin (eds), Leisure in Britain 1780 - 1939, 1983

[2] James Walvin, Beside the Seaside, 1978; Leisure and Society 1830 - 1950, 1978

During the early stages of research it became apparent that the term "working-class organisation" needed to be clarified. The definition becomes problematic when applied to such groups as the Mechanics' Institutes that were frequently established by middle-class radicals or rational recreationists with the intention of attracting workers to them. Some of the socialist groups were dominated by middle-class idealism although they had the support of many workers and trade unionists. These groups proved of most benefit to the people who some historians would categorise as lower middle class such as artisans, clerks and teachers. However as they were wage earners or involved in only small scale enterprise they fit the definition of working class as they had no ownership or control of the means of production. All the organisations I have included had the objective of improving life and conditions for working people through improvement of working conditions and pay, providing educational opportunities and worthwhile leisure.

The word tourism also needs to be defined: should it apply only to holidays involving overnight stays away from home or should day trips and local activities be included? Should all travel away from home be considered even if connected with employment or political activity or only leisure and pleasure trips? For the purposes of this thesis, tourism refers to travel away from home for purposes not connected with employment. Family visits to relatives could also fit this definition and for many people, especially children, the first experience of a holiday away from home was a stay with grandparents or an aunt and uncle in the country or even in another town. During the nineteenth century many industrial workers were still first or second generation town dwellers who maintained family connections with relatives living in

the countryside. Large as this contribution to working-class holidaymaking would have been it has not been studied in its own right as part of this work as it comprised so many individual arrangements which have left little written references. It is popular tourism, that is holidays as a result of the collective aspects of working-class life and culture, which are studied here.

During the early stages of working-class history, workers did not take time off to travel and stay away from home as a leisure activity, although some travelled to search for work or migrated, usually due to economic circumstances. As it is a process of change and development which is under scrutiny, rather than an event or phenomenon static in time, shorter trips have relevance during the decade from 1840 onwards when excursions clearly played a part in the initiation of workers into travel for pleasure. Day excursions were the precursors of longer trips. As these early developments are outside the main period of study yet of importance to the growth of holiday taking amongst workers, they have been included and discussed in order to set the context of the work and the background for the starting point of the main discussion.

Primary source material used includes minute books of local committees associated with arrangements for the Great Exhibition, hand bills and advertisements, trade union and TUC reports and correspondence, minutes of government commissions, official reports and oral reminiscences. These sources have been chosen because they illustrate contemporary opinions and how these were interpreted for or by the labouring classes and artisans. Some of them give insights into how workers themselves

viewed events and the importance leisure, travel and tourism held for them, as well as how entrepreneurs tried to orientate their tourist products to working-class tastes and needs. Numerous works on tourism, working-class culture, labour history, social and economic history, particularly those looking at holidays, resorts and leisure, contemporary newspaper reports, and even fiction have been referred to. There is a paucity of original material produced by workers themselves. Paradoxically minutes and documents from the working men's committees from the Great Exhibition are preserved but nothing has been located for the more recent holiday savings clubs other than reports. Perhaps this is because the Exhibition was seen as a special event worthy of commemoration whilst going-off clubs were just part of "normal" life and therefore the records were disposable as artefacts. The Great Exhibition has been chosen as a key event in working-class travel and tourism. All the elements of the modern inclusive tour, typical of late twentieth century holiday making were features of the arrangements by workers' committees arranging visits in 1851. Even so, most tourism text books credit Thomas Cook with its invention, or even Vladimir Raitz of Horizon Holidays a century later, with the innovation of the package holiday.

An aim of the thesis is to revisit some of the existing texts relevant to the study of working-class tourism within the discipline of history. Certain key texts will be discussed to provide a theoretical and critical base from which to construct the thesis that the working class and its organisations were instrumental in the development of mass tourism. These key texts in the history of holidaymaking include works by Harold Perkin, J A R Pimlott, John Walton, James Walvin and Colin Ward and Dennis Hardy. Some of the works by these historians

contain detailed studies of particular aspects of holiday-making, such as the growth of resorts by Harold Perkin[3]. Aspects of the accommodation sector of the tourism industry have been focused on, for example the Blackpool landlady by John Walton[4] and holiday camps and holiday home development on marginal land along the coasts by Colin Ward and Dennis Hardy[5]. Although these detailed studies are on the whole examining facilities provided for the working class they are not concerned with a wider investigation of holidays within the arena of the labour movement and working-class culture.

The other key texts in the history of holidays provide a general overview of developments starting with the Grand Tour and spas, through to excursions, the growth of resorts and what people did on holiday. These works starting with Pimlott[6] over fifty years ago and more recently in the late 1970's and early 1980's by John Walton[7] and James Walvin[8] are looking at the scene from a very wide viewpoint. Although they do not leave out the working class the aim of the works is to describe and document the rise of the holidaymaking habit across the broader social spectrum, not specifically for the working

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[3] Harold Perkin, The Social Tone of Victorian Seaside Resorts, The Structured Crowd, Sussex, 1981

[4] John K Walton, The Blackpool Landlady, Manchester, 1979

[5] Colin Ward and Dennis Hardy, Arcadia for All, London, 1984 and Goodnight Campers, London, 1986

[6] J A R Pimlott, The Englishman's Holiday, 1947 reprinted by Hassock's of Sussex 1976

[7] John K Walton, The English Seaside Resort – A Social History 1750-1914, Leicester University Press, 1983

[8] James Walvin, Beside the Seaside, London, 1978

class. However, this thesis owes a great deal to these earlier writers who have provided not only an opening for the academic study of the history of tourism but also much of the inspiration for this work.

In addition to the studies specifically about holidays, the historiography of tourism must include the generic studies of leisure in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and the debate generated through the late 1970's between social control and class expression. These texts such as those by Peter Bailey[9], A P Donajgrodski[10], Gareth Stedman Jones[11], Douglas Reid[12] and Golby and Purdue[13] are used to contextualise the thesis within the wider field of working-class leisure in general and also to provide the basis of a theoretical framework. Leisure and the working class during the interwar years has been dealt with by Stephen G Jones working from a similar perspective to this thesis, albeit covering all forms of leisure in a much more constrained time period. Jones produced an analysis drawing on economic, social and political perspectives of the years 1918 to 1938, a period when holidays with pay first became part of the mainstream labour movement's political agenda. Jones asserted that "the demand for leisure was

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[9] Peter Bailey, Leisure and Class in Victorian England, Rational Recreation and the contest for control, 1830-1885, London, 1978

[10] A P Donajgrodski (ed), Social Control in Nineteenth Century Britain, London, 1977

[11] Gareth Stedman Jones, Class Expression Versus Social Control? A critique of recent trends in the social history of leisure, History Workshop Journal, Volume 4, 1977, pp162-170

[12] Douglas Reid, The Decline of Saint Monday 1766-1876, Past and Present, No 71, 1976, pp76-101

[13] Golby and Purdue, The Civilisation of the Crowd, London, 1984

not simply a sign of economic and social progress, it was in fact organised and articulated by the labour movement".[14]

Because the thesis is concerned not with holidays as an entity or a commodity but with the specific role of the working class in the development of mass tourism it also draws heavily on existing works in labour history. As the class became organised through the trade union movement, it found the means to acquire paid time off through the collective bargaining process and eventually was able to press for a legislative right to paid leave through the Holidays with Pay Act. The trade union histories were chosen for reference because of the descriptions of and extensive quotations of conference decisions and negotiations on pay and conditions including hours of work and paid leave. Because they follow closely transcripts of the original debates these texts have been used in preference to reading every document produced by unions in a search for references to holidays. The authors of these histories have already done that for their respective unions and indexed their own studies and these have been used to supplement information derived from the TUC Archive in the Modern Records Centre at the University of Warwick.

Even though this thesis draws heavily on secondary sources they are being evaluated and used in new contexts to form the fundamentals of this study into working-class tourism. It is not the tourist product that is being studied but the processes by which workers achieved holidays and were able to enjoy the experience. For

[14] Stephen G. Jones, Workers at Play, A Social and Economic History of Leisure 1918-1939, London, 1986

instance, most histories of tourism would not include an examination of socialist theory on leisure but this one does as it motivated many workers' organisations. As these philosophies were so important to many working-class activists, understanding these ideas can clarify their actions.

Apart from the works of the historians mentioned above, the existing work on the history of tourism ignores the role of the working class in its development. Workers are assigned the role merely of passive consumers of a product conceived outside their own culture and experiential sphere. Much of the official history of the tourism industry has been written by or for what are now big businesses to be used as promotional material. This has inevitably led to the creation and propagation of a number of myths about the industry's origins, as these "histories" have become the source materials for other writers. The following quotations are all taken from student text books in current use in schools and colleges and are aimed at young people studying the business of tourism. The requirements of the vocational curriculum are such that the content of syllabuses is highly influenced by the demands of the employers, in this case travel companies.

"Although the average working day in the 1750s was 14 hours, the Industrial Revolution gave people time outside their working shifts for leisure".[15]

[15] Tony Outhart, Lindsey Taylor and Ray Barker, Leisure and Tourism for Advanced GNVQ, Collins GNVQ, London, 1997, p47

"Although George Stephenson's "Rocket" carried passengers for the 27 miles between Stockton and Darlington in 1825, the first all-passenger rail link to be built was between Liverpool and Manchester in 1830".[16]

"What got railways going as a major form of passenger transport were certain entrepreneurs such as Thomas Cook and Sir Rowland Hill, who hired trains from the railway companies and then sold seats to their friends and the public in general. At first the railways linked all the major towns and cities, but because of the exploits of Thomas Cook these were soon extended to the resorts, so that travel was purchased for both business and pleasure."[17]

"Thomas Cook was accredited with the first organized excursion between Leicester and Loughborough for his Temperance Association in 1841".[18]

"Passenger rail travel was initially expensive and used mainly by businessmen, but in 1841 Thomas Cook chartered a train to take the local temperance organisation from Leicester to Loughborough. It was so successful that, within five years, he and other entrepreneurs were

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[16] Outhart et al, op cit, p48

[17] John Ward, Phil Higson, William Campbell; GNVQ Advanced Leisure and Tourism, Second Edition, Cheltenham, 1996, p52

[18] Ward et al, op cit, p52

running rail excursions as fully commercial enterprises".[19]

"Other travel organisations, such as the Cyclist Touring Club, imitated Cook's tours, albeit that, rather than focus on pleasure, they put more emphasis on education and health".[20]

"The passing of the Bank Holiday Act gave every employee four public holidays a year".[21]

"The introduction of paid and bank holidays was a result of the nineteenth century reforms of working conditions. But it was a gradual development brought about partly by legislation and partly by more enlightened employers".[22]

"It was not until 1938 that it became a legal requirement for employers to give their employees paid holidays".[23]

"In 1938 the government recognised the importance of holidays in maintaining health and efficiency of the nation's workforce through the Annulee (sic) Report".[24]

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[19] Outhart et al, op cit, p48

[20] John Ward et al, op cit, p52

[21] Brian Jones, Jill Kennaugh, Christine Parry, Judith Ross, ed Peter Trigg; Leisure and Tourism GNVQ Advanced Student Textbook, Oxford 1996, p52

[22] Oxford GNVQ Advanced Leisure and Tourism, Oxford University Press, 1996, p43

[23] Outhart et al, op cit, p47

"The holiday camp was first introduced by Sir Billy Butlin in 1936 with the opening of a Butlin's Holiday Camp at Skegness. Aimed at the growing mass of low-income families. Accommodation and food were provided, together with 24-hour entertainment". ...."The holiday camp was a forerunner of what people have today become accustomed to expect from packaged holidays". Vladimir Raitz from Horizon Holidays is credited with the first ever modern package holiday".[25]

"The first Butlin's holiday camp was opened in 1937 at Skegness, sparking an enthusiasm for holiday camps".[26]

"Horizon is generally credited with organising the first package holiday".[27]

"As the potential for air travel increased entrepreneurs realised that there was scope to offer holidays to foreign destinations which combined transport, accommodation, meals and resort services in one package. This marked the emergence of the inclusive package holiday as we know it".[28]

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[24] Jones, Kennaugh et al, op cit, p54. The actual familiar name of the Report of the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay was the "Amulree Report".

[25] Ibid

[26] Youell, op cit, p12

[27] Youell, op cit, p16

[28] Outhart et al, op cit, p49

All of these statements, taken from Advanced level General National Vocational Qualification textbooks, are demonstrably false or at best only partially true. These popular myths and common misconceptions about the origins of tourism are being perpetuated through the preparatory education of those who want careers within the UK tourism and leisure industries who are being taught in sixth form and further education colleges at pre-undergraduate level.

This official version of history, expounded and encouraged by the General National Vocational curriculum makes no mention whatsoever of the contributions and achievements of the many thousands of ordinary working people to the development of leisure and tourism. These working people knew and understood what they and their workmates, friends and neighbours wanted and needed and they tried to make sure they got it by taking the lead in labour movement, workplace and community based organisation. These working-class organisers and activists looked for collective ways of securing time off work, the means to afford holidays, cheaper transport costs through travelling together as a group or challenging the alienation of industrial society and commercialised leisure through communal holidaymaking. Even at an individual level, people were able to choose between spending on consumer and leisure products that met their own needs, as defined by their working-class culture whilst rejecting those offered by outside interests which they did not much like or want or could not afford.

Working-class people took the initiative and developed their own holiday forms, they did not wait for the entrepreneurs like Cook, Butlin and Raitz to come along with ideas and schemes which could then be purchased. That they were skilful businessmen and entrepreneurs is precisely what the famous commercial developers of tourism as a business ought to be remembered for. They created enterprises that have become household names, businesses synonymous with particular types of holiday products. This should not, though, credit them with the invention of their product, only its later commercial application after the true pioneers had already had the ideas, taken the initiative and set up their own holiday and travel schemes and through the popularity of their initiatives, already tested the market for the businessmen to exploit for their own profit.

The credit for the initial development of travel and leisure for working-class people should be given to those pioneers, working with few resources other than enthusiasm, commitment and solidarity. They helped to organise such initiatives as the craftsmen's tramping circuits, savings clubs collections and savings in their factory, street or pub, group travel to the Great Exhibition, excursion train charters for the Mechanics' Institutes and Friendly Societies and were active in the local communities that collectively insisted on their right to take time off work to celebrate the wakes. Other contributors, no less important to the story, were the seaside landladies who knew what their guests liked and tried against all odds to provide it at a minimal price and the socialists and trade unionists and co-operative society members who opened up holiday camps a generation before Butlin started his first one in 1936. It must not be over looked either, that another of the

most important contributions to the development of holidays was of course the campaigns for paid holidays, better pay and conditions manifested through the collective strength of the labour movement. This was not a "gradual development brought about by more enlightened employers" as the textbooks would have people believe.

Students of tourism are taught that holiday travel came about because of the initiatives and foresight of a few exceptional individuals. This means that the mostly young people who study the subject are having their own history and culture taken away and hidden from them. This thesis will attempt to redress the balance in knowledge of the development of the holiday and tourism industry by focusing on its real originators and pioneers. It will place working-class travel and leisure within its own context, separate from the subsequent commercial aspects and its middle-class interpreters.

The discussion takes as a starting point the year 1850 and the preparations for the Great Exhibition, although a discussion of earlier travel takes place to set the work in the context of expectations existing at the time. It continues up until the start of the 1950s and the subsequent beginnings of mass tourism. These dates represent neither the beginning nor the end of the story of working-class tourism and holidaymaking. These time markers were chosen as they are significant watersheds in the development of tourism and the consumer society in general[29].

[29] Thomas Richards, The Commodity Culture of Victorian England - Advertising and Spectacle, Stanford University Press, 1990

The years 1850 to 1851 mark a change in orientation of working-class politics and orientation. The early movement was characterised by futile attempts to resist the changes in productive relations and working conditions brought about by industrialisation and capitalist development. Movements such as Luddism, Rebecca and Captain Swing all illustrate the desire of many labouring people to resist industrial development and their own proletarianisation. Campaigns around the Reform Act (1832), Local Government Reform (1836) and Chartism had all involved alliances of working and middle-class radicals. As the middle class gained political power, influence and cultural hegemony they no longer needed these alliances with workers. Workers also began to realise the need for their own independent action. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards capitalism was firmly established and some groups of workers saw the route to political advancement through reformism and the extension of the franchise. Others wished to work towards its total overthrow. The Communist Manifesto outlining Marx's analysis of social change was published in 1848. Both strands of labour movement ideology show a development in the understanding of the nature and dynamics of industrial, capitalist society. Adherents of both of these philosophical approaches in the labour movement were active in the campaigns for improved quality and length of workers' leisure time and holidays. The chapter that follows will examine attitudes towards holidays and leisure of both of these strands of labour movement political thought.

The following chapter will look at the political and theoretical background to holidays and leisure, both contemporarily and historically. Theories of social control have been prevalent amongst many "left" academics

but this does not always take account either of workers' free choice to select one type of activity over another nor their instrumentality in wanting to appear to choose something appearing "respectable" in order to hasten political emancipation. Karl Marx developed a theory where the length of the working day and the amount of free time available to workers are a fundamental part of the class struggle. For the working class with nothing to sell but its labour power, which itself has become a commodity, it is vital that enough time can be secured to enable it to reproduce that valuable labour power through rest and recuperation. Those workers most able to afford to enjoy their leisure and take excursions and holidays away from home were often initially, but not always, a part of that skilled, more secure group which came to be known as the labour aristocracy.

The second chapter sets the scene for developments following the economic and political watershed of 1850 by looking at the situation regarding travel for workers before that date. The "Artisan's Grand Tour" of the tramping circuit with its network of houses of call and methods of funding the travelling craft worker will be examined because of its probable later influence on the development of other arrangements regarding travel. Early excursions arranged by and for working-class groups of travellers were for many people their first experiences of a rail journey and a visit relatively far from home for the purposes of leisure and not connected with work or family affairs.

Exhibitions often provided the self-improving legitimisation for these early excursionists who needed to feel the justification of taking time off to travel

and the corresponding expense which sheer enjoyment alone could not give. The ultimate exhibition in England was the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations held in London in 1851. Aspects of this that affected visits by workers are examined in detail in Chapter Three. This important event provided the impetus for the initiation of savings and travel clubs and in rare cases the very first examples of paid leave for non-salaried workers. Because London was too far and the exhibition too large for many people to visit in one day, accommodation and even some entertainment and excursions as well as transport had to be provided. Workers' representatives and groups took the initiative here and in their travel clubs created the very first all-inclusive package holidays a century before Vladimir Raitz and his Horizon Holidays.

There were no established paid holidays, apart from those gained by an extremely small minority, during the nineteenth century and for a growing minority for at least half of the twentieth century. This, however, does not mean that there was no way workers could secure any free time for leisure or even holidays. Christmas, Easter and Whitsuntide were old established "holydays" but unpaid even after the Bank Holidays Act of 1871 and its subsequent extension. The Act created a new secular holiday on the first Monday in August, again usually without payment. The fourth chapter will look at the ways and means employed by workers in different English regions and industries to obtain a rest from the rigours of everyday working life and to experience some type of holiday enjoyment. Some of them joined "Going-off Clubs" and saved up for a holiday, others worked flat out to earn more in the weeks before they went off to enable them to cover their expenses while not working. Some

factory workers just took time off en masse whatever their employers thought. Some did not bother turning up for work, others negotiated collectively for permission to have time off together. On the other hand, some employers closed down their works for a week or two for maintenance or to prevent seasonal overproduction and stockpiling, to the annoyance of the workforce who were prevented from earning.

Before the development of holidays for the working class could progress substantially, it was imperative that income and jobs could be secured while the employees were away so they were not faced with debt on their return. Without paid leave, workers needed at least double their normal income during the time they were on holiday. This was because in the days that they had no earnings whatsoever they still had to pay out all their normal household expenses and feed themselves and their families. Additionally they would have had to find extra money to pay not only for the holiday accommodation and transport but also incidental costs such as new clothes to wear to look their best whilst away. New clothes were traditionally purchased at Whitsuntide or wakes and revels (a West Country word for wakes) time[30]. They also needed spending money so that they could actually enjoy themselves. Paid holidays were not easily obtained, even from "enlightened" employers. They were won through the campaigns of trade unions through the collective bargaining process and often through industrial dispute and strike action or the threat of it. Despite holidays

[30] According to Melanie Tebbutt, families that did not conform to the cultural norm of wearing new clothes at Whit could become victims of malicious neighbourhood gossip. Melanie Tebbutt, Women's Talk? A Social History of Gossip in Working-class Neighbourhoods 1880-1960, Aldershot, 1995, p80

with pay first being raised as a demand at the Trade Union Congress (TUC) conference in 1911 and the passing of the Holidays with Pay Act in 1938, following evidence in favour given mostly by the labour movement to the parliamentary committee in the Amulree Report, it was not until about 1950 onwards that paid leave became the normal expectation of the majority of workers. The struggles and achievements of workers towards holidays with pay will be investigated in Chapter Five.

The accommodation sector of the tourism industry specialising in catering for working-class visitors is examined in the sixth chapter. For holidays away from home to become a practical reality it was also important that suitable accommodation at an affordable price to those on modest incomes was available. As well as being at the right price, workers needed to be put up in lodgings that suited their own tastes and lifestyles, and in resorts equipped with leisure facilities that matched their own cultural preferences. These cultural preferences often led to entertainment being provided that reflected the fair grounds of the traditional wakes and pubs and music halls, much to the condemnation of the middle classes and even some sympathetic socialist reformers. Seeking an alternative to the prevailing popular boarding house holiday at resorts becoming increasingly commercialised, some socialists and co-operators set up their own holiday camps. Although not the very first camps, which were imitations of the tented accommodation of the militias, for young men only and Christian in philosophy, pursuing a religious daily routine[31], these pioneer socialist camps, followed closely

[31] Cunningham's Young Men's Christian Camp on the Isle of Man was probably the first from 1894 but was not a provider of family

by those of the co-operative movement and the trade unions were the first camps to offer family holidays. The very first of these was Dodd's Socialist Camp at Caister which opened in 1906, thirty years before that of Billy Butlin at Skegness which itself was an imitation of the holiday centres of the trade unions such as NALGO.

The massive expected increase in holidaymakers once the deferred Holidays with Pay Act came into effect after the end of the Second World War caused great concern among planners, who were faced with meeting a huge rise in potential demand. This would be at a time when there was much less holiday accommodation available than there had been even in the peak years before the war. Official and labour movement responses to this anticipated unprecedented urge to travel and take holidays are detailed in Chapter Seven.

The work concludes with a summary of the main themes of the thesis. A short discussion of the situation regarding holidays with pay in some other European countries at the time of the British Act of 1938 is made for comparative purposes. The present situation at the close of the twentieth century is summed up as a conclusion to the work. Surprisingly this shows that although the numbers of people taking a holiday away from home has increased consistently since the passing of the Holidays with Pay Act, the actual proportion of people unable to have a holiday at all has not changed much since 1939. In that year forty-one per cent of people surveyed by the British Institute of Public Opinion could

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holidays. For more information see Dennis Ward and Colin Hardy's book Goodnight Campers, London, 1986

not afford a holiday. This is still comparable to the present situation, as in 1996 when official statistics show that forty per cent of the British population did not have a holiday. This highlights the fact that despite legislation, paid leave and cultural expectations, the biggest barrier to holidays for the working class is still low incomes.

CHAPTER 1

PERSPECTIVES ON HOLIDAYS AND LEISURE

1.1 The Transition to Modernity in Work and Leisure - Social Autonomy or Social Control?

Work and leisure are not exclusive areas, both are an integral part of existence under capitalism. The quality of leisure for working people, its amount and content, is directly related to working conditions and hence to work place organisation. Better or more secure incomes, as well as improved conditions and shorter hours of work meant that by the twentieth century many workers were less physically tired which in turn helped to facilitate leisure travel (ie tourism). The increased regimentation, decreased autonomy, intensified production and, in some cases, de-skilling and loss of productive control all led to a greater need for workers to have periods away from the work environment and routine in order to recuperate and benefit from "recreation", literally the re-creation of physical and mental productive capacities.

The modern distinction between the ideas of work and leisure and their alternation, is a product of industrial capitalism. Prior to this, there were festivals together with informal and irregular breaks from work. Industrial societies have leisure, weekends and vacations. The emergence of distinct periods of leisure is therefore part of the process of industrialisation. In his 1994 paper, "The Invention of Leisure in Early Modern Europe", Peter Burke uses this concept to show that the history of leisure

is discontinuous.[1] If this theory is correct there is what Michel Foucault called a conceptual break or "rupture" between the two periods and so the very idea of the history of leisure before the industrial revolution is anachronistic.[2] Foucault's thesis, according to Burke, cuts history into two slices, but the supposed dichotomy is misleading as it reduces the great variety of medieval and early modern European ideas, assumptions and practices into a single "festival culture". This argument demonstrates the danger of projecting modern concepts of leisure back into the past without looking at the meanings which contemporaries gave to their activities. For Burke this trap can be avoided by studying not just leisure but also ideas of work and time. Whilst not concerned with the ideas of the early modern period, this project takes on board this argument by setting leisure in a context clearly relating it to the quest for freetime as an element of labour history in industrial society. Leisure is now integral to working life and cannot be separated from it. Unemployment and retirement are composed of large amounts of freetime but in themselves are not leisure as this involves voluntary control of that freetime and what activities take place within it. Large numbers of retired people take holidays away from home, helping to extend the holiday season and stagger demand in the resorts. This activity does involve leisure and as a break from the normal daily routine is a holiday. It is not the freetime of the retired person which

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[1] Peter Burke, Viewpoint - The Invention of Tradition in Early Modern Europe, Past and Present, No 146, Feb 1995, pp136-150

[2] Michel Foucault, The Order of Things, trans A Sheridan, London, 1970, pxxii

in this context is the holiday but the deliberate act of doing something quite distinct from day to day activity.

For working people, holidays have become a part of the routine of working life, periodic breaks from employment whilst still receiving a wage or salary for that employment. Whilst not projecting modern concepts of leisure and holidays backwards in time, some pre-industrial celebratory or "festival" activities can be seen to have had an influence on modern leisure activities, although the cultural meanings attached to them by participants have changed. Although ways of enjoying modern leisure and vacations are not continuous with the pre-industrial past, being obviously different and holding different meanings for industrial workers than their ancestors would have recognised, in England at least, Foucault's dichotomy is not so clear as to be described as a rupture. Cultural changes are influenced by existing and previous cultural preferences and cannot be divorced entirely from the past, although the meanings attached to them are undoubtedly different and their origins forgotten, with no apparent relevance to industrial life. For example wakes weeks undoubtedly influenced the early advance of industrial holidays in Lancashire and western Yorkshire but the modern wakes holidays or the savings clubs of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, carry no association with religious ritual in the minds of those participating.

By the late twentieth century, free time had become as much a feature of advanced capitalist society as work. As a component of the reward for labour, leisure is now as vital as salaries and wages; paid time off and limitations on hours of work are part of the conditions of service in all

but casual employment. The inability to afford a holiday away from home is one of the indicators of relative poverty in modern Britain. The business of tourism and related trades are a major part of the economy not just in the United Kingdom and other advanced capitalist economies with large consumer markets but especially in less industrialised countries which earn a substantial part of their overall gross domestic product from receiving tourists from the more developed and affluent areas of the world.[3]

Since the 1970s there has been much academic analysis of leisure in industrial society. Much of this analysis has focussed on the negative theme, from a working class point of view, of social control. In his 1978 book "Leisure and Class in Victorian England", Peter Bailey, discussing rational recreation, argued that it was frequently offered as an alternative to traditional forms of recreation which were under attack and was frequently regarded with suspicion by workers themselves.[4] Liberals, often identifiers with the interests of the capitalist class and the promoters of industrialisation, were depicted as opposed to pleasure and sensuous pursuits, while the Tories were seen as less hostile. The Tories' indulgence of popular leisure was viewed by radicals as harking back to the days of feudal social relations where benevolent lord and villager together shared in communal festivities. This analysis of pre-industrial leisure as indicative of inter-class harmony, fails to identify this benevolent paternalism as no less a

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[3] Douglas Pearce, Topics in Applied Geography - Tourist Development, Harlow, 1981, p55

[4] Peter Bailey, Leisure and Class in Victorian England, Rational Recreation and the Contest for Control, 1830-1885, London, 1978, pp35-55

means of social control than later capitalist, commercialised forms.

When leisure was first the subject of serious historical analysis in the 1970s, the prevalent approach to the topic, according to Gareth Stedman Jones, paid "far more attention to the ways in which entrepreneurs or the propertied classes attempted to change popular uses of leisure time than to ways in which craftsmen, artisans or working-class activists attempted to organise their non-work time or sought to re-orientate the use of non-work time by others".[5] For this reason, says Stedman Jones, "the cumulative picture conveyed by research into popular recreation is out of perspective with the sharply delineated foreground occupied by puritan, Methodist and evangelical moral reformers, gentry deciding where to place their patronage, prescient magistrates, calculating employers, prurient municipal elites, entrepreneurial publicans and rationalising merchants of leisure".[6]

Some historians, such as E P Thompson, viewed the suppression of popular rural and working-class "traditional" leisure pursuits and ways of celebrating as an attack on workers by the capitalist class.[7] This perceived need for

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[5] Gareth Stedman Jones, Class Expression versus Social Control? A critique of recent trends in the social history of leisure, History Workshop Journal, Vol 4, 1977, pp162-170, p162

[6] Stedman Jones, op cit, p163

[7] See E P Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class, Harmondsworth, 1963, pp441-451; E P Thompson, Customs in Common, Chapter 6, Time Work Discipline and Industrial Capitalism, London, 1991, pp352-403; Robert Storch (ed), Popular Culture and Custom in Nineteenth

suppression, to force workers to give up old ways of enjoying themselves and to accept new ones which were less disruptive to production and good order is often associated with the early days of capitalist development and the drive towards primitive accumulation. This ignores the fact that "rational recreation" was also promoted by class-conscious workers in an evolving artisan sub-culture, not for reasons of class collaboration or social control but to assist in self-improvement, to give a better quality of life and to use as propaganda in the fight for shorter hours of work and increased time for leisure and self-determined activities.[8] With industrialisation, free time for the industrial workers significantly decreased with a reduction in holidays and an extension of the working week. Annual work done increased by over a third, according to an estimate cited by Wray Vamplew, rising from around three thousand hours a year in the mid-eighteenth century to over four thousand by the early nineteenth.[9] The Bank of England had closed for 47 days of holidays in 1761, reducing progressively to forty-four days in 1808, eighteen in 1830 and only four by 1834.[10] This erosion of free time was reflected elsewhere, in the Cornish mines, for example, by 1842 Christmas Day and Good Friday were the only days miners could take off. In the

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Century England, Beckenham Kent, 1982; A P Donajgrodzki (ed), Social Control in Nineteenth Century Britain, London, 1977

[8] Douglas A Reid, Interpreting the Festival Calendar: Wakes and Fairs as Carnivals, in Robert Storch (ed), Popular Culture and Custom in Nineteenth Century England, op cit, p132

[9] Wray Vamplew, Pay Up and Play the Game, Cambridge, 1988, p40

[10] Vamplew, op cit, p39

textile mills holidays had been reduced to between five and twelve days per year, by the early nineteenth century.[11]

As industrial society matured so the middle-class values of hard-work and asceticism, identified by Max Weber as the Protestant work ethic,[12] became more relaxed in the younger generations of industrialists. Secure in business and benefiting financially and socially from the hard work and self-sacrifice of their parents, from the 1850s onwards, increasingly time was set aside for leisure amongst the middle classes. As Peter Bailey noted, the young bourgeois liked enjoyment![13] They had become less willing to spend so many hours working as the previous generation had. The work ethic though, embedded as it was in dominant middle-class culture, meant that leisure itself was a moral dilemma. Hence the justification of leisure as rational recreation and self-improvement. What the view of changes in leisure as a form of social control largely fails to acknowledge is the instrumentality of the working class in its choice of certain kinds of activity as opposed to others. The papers by Eileen and Stephen Yeo "Ways of Seeing: Control and Leisure versus Class and Struggle" and Eileen Yeo in "Culture and Constraint in Working-class Movements 1830-1855" for the first time attempted to address the issue of the working class acting as definer and controller of its

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[11] Ibid

[12] Max Weber, The Protestant Work Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, 1904/1905, English version, London 1930

[13] Bailey, op cit, pp58-59

own culture rather than as passive receivers of cultural products within an entirely bourgeois defined context.[14]

Social control theorists seem to have overlooked an important point. So called traditional leisure was itself continually evolving and changing from the Middle Ages when the concept of salvation by works encouraged numerous sacred rituals; communal merry-making, and semi-secular calendar customs to raise money for the parish funds developed in times of relative prosperity. The advance of Protestantism changed the context of worship and also destroyed much of the earlier festive culture,[15] which followed the ritual year associated with the Catholic Church. From the late Middle Ages and Tudor period, elites feared the threat to public order that many communal festivities posed, for example Shrove Tide street football and cockthreshing collections in London were forbidden in 1409.[16] Later, after years of suppression, a reaction was produced and nostalgia grew for the old communal merrymaking, which underwent a revival in some places in the early seventeenth century. More suppression by Protestantism came with the Commonwealth. After the Restoration, ritual was restored to the Church and secular merry-making for a while was no longer persecuted. Many so-called traditional ceremonials,

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[14] Eileen and Stephen Yeo, Ways of Seeing: Control and Leisure Versus Class and Struggle, in Eileen and Stephen Yeo (eds), Popular Culture and Class Conflict 1590-1914, Brighton, 1981, pp128-154: Eileen Yeo, Culture and Constraint in Working Class Movements 1830-1855, Eileen and Stephen Yeo, op cit, pp155-186

[15] Ronald Hutton, The Rise and Fall of Merry England, the ritual year 1400-1700, Oxford, 1994, p261

[16] Hutton, op cit, p19

like Mummers' plays, became adopted countrywide, spread by printed chap-books in the eighteenth century, the earliest recorded instance being in 1738.[17] From the extensive work of Ronald Hutton, it is clear that change in and suppression of communal leisure pursuits was not a unique feature of early capitalism.

Many surviving ceremonies linked to the calendar, together with their associated revelry, were effectively obliterated in the years following the Municipal Reform and Highways Acts of 1835. The Highways Act made many long established street celebrations illegal by banning sport from public thoroughfares.[18] Reformed local authorities had powers to prosecute and ban activities they thought a threat to public order by use of the Riot Act and enforcement by the newly formed police forces.[19] But these "attacks" on popular custom seem to have met little resistance from workers and struggles to preserve them did not meet with much solidarity, unlike strikes of the same period. Stedman Jones interprets this as the demonstration that these forms of activity did not have much relevance for or deep support from the majority of workers themselves.[20] The introduction of a new work process often changed the hours and intensity of work and its seasonality. Class struggle focussed on the

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[17] Hutton, op cit, p8

[18] Hutton, Ronald, The Stations of the Sun, Oxford, 1996, p161

[19] Examples of popular pastimes associated with the calendar which ceased following the 1835 legislation were Shrove Tuesday celebrations such as street football in Kingston upon Thames in 1840, in Derby in 1845 and Leicester's Whipping Toms in 1846. See also Bob Bushaway, By Rite, London, 1982

[20] Stedman Jones, op cit, p169

work place and against the capitalist control of work. "Traditional recreations not only occupied a subordinate place in this battle, but many political activists saw these traditional pastimes as positively counter-productive in the formation of a working class capable of fighting this struggle".[21] Where earlier communal leisure forms survived throughout a wide area, as in the north west England textile producing towns, they were a result of community solidarity centred on the work place, where the collective action of "running away" enforced the wakes holiday. The "Greatest 'social control' available to capitalism is the wage relationship itself - the fact that, in order to live and reproduce, the worker must perpetually resell his or her labour power".[22] In the railways and some utility industries, holidays incorporated as part of the wage relationship, far from being a gratuity were used to discipline the work force. Holidays in these cases were a reward for good attendence or withheld from those who lost time through disputes, absenteeism or sickness, in effect they were used by the employers as a means of social control.

As it is constricted by type and hours of work, to singularly study leisure in isolation from the wider political context has two inherent dangers. Firstly the struggles around leisure in the first half of the nineteenth century were no more than epilogues of struggles being fought out in the course of the working week relating to industrial change itself. The second danger is also related to the primacy of work and the social relations within which

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[21] Ibid

[22] Ibid

it is carried on, in the determination of class position and the articulation of class attitudes. This, states Stedman Jones, if thought of in terms of a polarity between "class expression and social control" leads to a danger of over politicising leisure as an arena of struggle.[23] He warns of the danger of interpreting the disappearance of pre-industrial relations as a huge defeat. As he points out, "leisure institutions which remained essential to workers, pubs for example, were strongly defended. Others were given up with little resistance, because they had ceased to have a point".[24]

Following the supposed correlation between moral levity and political sedition, seen by William Wilberforce and his Society for the Suppression of Vice in the early nineteenth century, the amusements of the poor were preached and legislated against until even the most innocuous were regarded in a lurid light.[25] Penalties were imposed upon sabbath-breakers, vagrants, tinkers, stage-dancers, tumblers, ballad singers, free-thinkers and naked bathers. Edward Thompson, in the Making of the English Working Class, argued that this suppression of popular ritual showed the triumph of the money-economy over the casual "uneconomic" rhythms of peasant semi-subsistence. In the industrial areas it showed in the extension of discipline of the factory or clock from working to leisure hours, from the working day to the Sabbath and the assault upon "Cobbler's

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[23] Stedman Jones, op cit, p170

[24] Ibid

[25] E P Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class, Harmondsworth, revised edition, 1968, p443

Monday" and traditional holidays and fairs.[26] Here, Thompson is clearly arguing that the suppression of working-class popular custom and amusement was a political act by the middle class to control the behaviour of the poorer classes.

The paper by Stedman Jones, "Class Expression versus Social Control?", places struggles relating to leisure firmly in the same arena as the general class struggle over relations within production. His conclusion then is surprising as he reiterates that the struggle in the factory is the struggle inherent in the relations of production and then concludes that:

> Struggles over leisure time do not have this inherent antagonism built into them. The primary point of a holiday is not political. It is to enjoy yourself, for tomorrow you must work".[27]

To politicise struggles over leisure as a form of class conflict, he claims "leads to the inrush of theories of incorporation to explain why workers have appeared to accept the capitalisation of leisure with passivity",[28] that is that leisure becomes a means of social control. This seems to contradict his argument that leisure cannot be divided from other aspects of capitalist society and is inherent in the wage relationship itself. This must be true if, as he demonstrated, leisure is constricted by type and hours of work. From this it can only be deduced that struggles over

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[26] Thompson, op cit, p444

[27] Stedman Jones, op cit, p170

[28] Ibid

leisure, working hours and holidays are part of a more general political struggle and can only be understood within a politicised context.

Despite the efforts of Stedman Jones to debunk the social-control theories of leisure and the work of Eileen and Stephen Yeo showing the working class as definer and controller of its own leisure, there remains a gap in the study of tourism and its relationship with working-class history. No-one has yet explored the role of workers as instrumental in the development of tourism where they are seen more than as passive consumers of a product sold to them from outside their own culture and experience. Without the struggles of workers to control working hours and conditions, to gain periods of leave from work and to earn enough of a surplus above subsistence levels to enable a sufficient disposable income to be attained, no development of tourism other than for a middle-class elite could have taken place. Going beyond economic determinism, in this perspective, this work is intended to relate political struggles for holidays with pay and the means with which to enjoy leisure to aspects of working-class culture and taste which influenced the choice by workers to go on holiday as opposed to indulging in other forms of consumption. This was also the proposition of Stephen G Jones, Eileen and Stephen Yeo and the American, Vernon Lidtke, in his work on working-class leisure in Imperial Germany.

The use made by workers of their holiday time was largely determined by their traditional collectivist culture, that is the belief that they had things in common with other workers based on their relationship to employment and production. Working-class culture itself was evolving after

1850, influenced by the radical, respectable culture which represented a new force in working-class society.[29] The commitment of the upper strata of the working class to repectability reflected an active response to middle class attempts to impose social discipline rather than a passive reception of bourgeois propaganda.[30] This group of more respectable workers, sometimes included in the term "labour aristocracy", according to Robert Gray in his book on the subject, was the most capable of fostering behaviour advocated by middle-class reformers and also was the most insistent on its own identity, resisting the heavy-handed patronage of many efforts at voluntary social improvement.[31] Within the Victorian working-class there was a wide differentiation of attitudes, between the assertion of working-class identity and the adoption of a consensual language shared with dominant groups in society.[32] It was in the last decades of the nineteenth century that the main features of the working-class culture, accepted by the 1950s as "traditional" were created.[33] Rising living standards and a more settled, secure existence contributed to the strengthening of the labour movement, not an acceptance of a middle-class outlook. The working class was itself

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[29] Tony Nicholson, Cleveland Ironstone Mining Communities, 1850-1881, in Keith Laybourn, ed., Social Conditions, Status and Community, 1860-c1920, pp 139-159p 159. Other papers in this volume also emphasise this evolution of working-class identity and culture.

[30] Robert Gray, The Aristocracy of Labour in Nineteenth -century Britian, c 1850-1914, Basingstoke, 1981, p40

[31] Ibid

[32] Gray, op cit, p41

[33] James Hinton, Labour and Socialism - A History of the British Labour Movement 1867-1974, Brighton, 1983, p29

stratified and not all workers shared exactly the same values and assumptions or tastes, however the term collective is used as a general description of its culture because of the inherent differences between the communality of working-class life formed by its relationship with the employers, the crowdedness of its residential neighbourhoods and, often, shared hardships. This created an outlook which was fundamentally different to that of the middle class, whose culture though collective in the sense of sharing recognised common values and assumptions about their place in the world, was affected by the ideals of bourgeois individualism and the privatisation of family life. In addition to the dichotomy between individualist and collectivist cultures, two different strands of political motivation and thought within the working-class and socialist political movement, reformist and revolutionary, can differentiate the fight for holidays for workers, although some concepts and beliefs were shared by both groups.

1.2 Rational Recreation and the Politics of Using Time

Although paid holidays were not achieved universally until after the Second World War, the political demand for increased leisure time for workers in the 1930s had its roots in the nineteenth century. In the middle of that century socialists had been in favour of moves which created more free time. Later in the century some of them sided with the middle-class rational recreationists. Some socialists and reformists thought that the demonstration by workers of the responsible use of free time might hasten political emancipation. Many of them were also opposed to the

commercialisation of leisure which they believed bred "false consciousness" and apathy. The enemy became the capitalist system of exploitation rather than any specific form of amusement.

Critics pointed out that the desire for profit resulted in a double exploitation; the exploitation of the entertainment providers or workers in the leisure industry as well as the exploitation of the entertained who were rarely offered edifying activities while at the same time entertainment was becoming more and more standardised. When making a profit was the sole motivation in the production of amusements, it was a threat to other, non-commercial ways of entertainment and spending leisure time. Standardisation and the development of a national market in the drive to maximise profit threatened to overwhelm the regional diversity in culture and recreational life that formerly existed. The manipulation of workers' leisure activities for profit by entrepreneurs in the entertainment business was seen by some, such as the Christian Socialists and also the Chartist Thomas Cooper, as a threat to developing an independent class-consciousness.[34] The late nineteenth century condemnation of amusements that offered fun and frivolity at the expense of rest and recreation also involved the condemnation of an industry that grew rich by manipulating the desire for such amusements. This new commercialised leisure seemed to have a powerful hold on its partakers that was difficult to overcome. These beliefs were held by those

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[34] Chris Waters, Social Reformers, Socialists and the Opposition to the Commercialisation of Leisure in late Victorian England, in Wray Vamplew (ed), The Economic History of Leisure Papers presented at the Eighth International Economic History Congress, Budapest, Aug 1982, p109

who sensed that the new "fun morality" threatened an older, radical culture and that the appeal of commercial entertainment reduced the ability of men and women to develop any alternatives.[35]

At this point it is useful to examine to what extent the elitism of middle-class tourism, based on itineraries of what one ought to do and see during travel, compared with the motives of the rational recreationists. For the middle class, tourism, especially to the Mediterranean countries, involved a need to see the "sights" relating to art, history and culture as had been part of the educational aspect of the Grand Tour or else ought to be justified on the grounds of health.[36]

With more local destinations for working class tourists, the rational recreationists would have approved similar nominal motivations, with British buildings, museums, art galleries or healthy activities in the fresh air replacing the Mediterranean sights visited by the elite. However much the middle classes and the socialist rational recreationists might approve of such activities, to their dismay the majority of working-class holidaymakers and trippers preferred to enjoy themselves, seeking pleasure for its own sake. A tongue in cheek admission of this by that most rational provider of recreation through education for working people, the Mechanics' Institute was written in a magazine accompanying its Exhibition in Leicester in 1840. The writers of the Leicester Exhibition Gazette showed, with an ironic sense of humour, a realisation of the incongruity

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[35] Waters, op cit, p108

[36] John Pemble, The Mediterranean Passion, Oxford, 1987

of placing education together with popular entertainment by including presumably fictitious letters to the editors from a person claiming to have sent to the exhibition a piece of Noah's Ark which had gone astray by becoming mixed up with wood shavings from some carpentry work. Another notice apologised for an unsuitable exhibition made by a person involved in an evening concert performing a comic song. It was stated that "the committee do not consider comic singing or FUN, among the legitimate amusements of the Exhibition".[37]

Not all socialists supported the rational recreationists. In June 1855, a protest demonstration against the Sunday Trading Bill turned into a riot on Hyde Park. This popular protest was organised by Chartists and the speakers were Bligh and Finlen, a member of the Chartist Executive. They saw the Bill as a class issue as it was the working class who, having no other free time, were compelled to do their shopping on a Sunday. Describing the event for the Neue Oder-Zeitung, Karl Marx noted that the struggle against clericalism assumes the same character in England as every serious struggle - the character of a class struggle waged by the poor against the rich, the people against the aristocracy, the "lower orders" against their "betters".[38] A poster summoning workers to the demonstration fixed to walls in London announced in huge letters

> New Sunday Bill prohibiting newspapers, shaving, smoking, eating and drinking and all kinds of

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[37] Leicester Exhibition Gazette, 23 July 1840

[38] Karl Marx, Anti-church Movement - Demonstration in Hyde Park, June 1855, Marx and Engels, Articles on Britain, Moscow, 1975 edition, p238

> recreation and nourishment, both corporeal and spiritual, which the poor people still enjoy at the present time. An open-air meeting of artisans, workers and the "lower orders" generally of the capital will take place in Hyde Park on Sunday afternoon to see how religiously the aristocracy is observing the Sabbath and how anxious it is not to employ its servants and horses on that day..... Come and bring your wives and children in order that they may profit by the example their "betters" set them![39]

Hyde Park was chosen as the venue for the protest as it was the place where the wealthy citizens of London would parade in their fine apparel and carriages. It had been promised by promoters of the Bill that the wealthy might not work their servants on Sunday. The rich were forced to run the gauntlet through the assembled working-class crowd as hostility increased after the police broke up the meeting and would not allow the speakers to address those assembled. Finlen did manage to speak as the crowd gathered too tightly around him for the police to intervene. "Six days a week", he said, "we are treated like slaves and now Parliament wants to rob us of the bit of freedom we still have on the seventh".[40]

Building on the political and class nature of the protest, the organisers of the demonstration had distributed leaflets among the crowd, inviting people to a public meeting to be held two days later for the purpose of electing delegates to

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[39] Marx, ibid, p238

[40] Finlen, quoted by Marx, ibid, p239

a conference for the reorganisation of Chartism in the capital.

That the Factory Acts of 1847 and 1850 would have given more leisure time to industrial workers had been the intention of the Bills' promoters. By limiting the hours that women and children were permitted to work in factories it had been anticipated that the long hours performed by men might be reduced too. The factory owners managed to get round this attempt at limiting the amount of exploitation of workers by introducing shift working, thereby keeping the hours of young and women workers at ten or less but making no reduction in the hours of adult men. Although this piece of legislation was a measure intended to benefit workers, it was still looking back to the days of paternalism and was campaigned for by an alliance of the aristocracy, Church and philanthropists. Whilst supported by the working class, the working men who were involved in the campaign tended to be those who looked back with nostalgia to pre-capitalist modes of production. Socialists and Chartists, though supporting the aim of the proposed reform most vociferously, did not share platforms with the upper-class promoters of the Bill. This association between workers and the most reactionary element of English society, according to Engels, meant that the campaign for the Ten Hours Bill had to be conducted quite separately from the revolutionary campaign of the workers.[41] The Chartists, of course, supported the Ten Hours Bill; they were the most numerous and active participants at the meetings in support of the Bill and they put their press at the disposal of the Short-Time Committee.

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[41] Frederick Engels, The English Ten Hours Bill, March 1850 from Marx and Engels, Articles on Britain, Moscow, 1975 edition, p97

Yet not a single Chartist campaigned officially alongside the aristocratic and bourgeois advocates of the Bill or sat on the Short-Time Committee in Manchester.[42] The Manchester Committee, according to Engels, consisted entirely of workers and foremen. The workers concerned, however:

> Were completely broken individuals, worn out by work, meek, God-fearing, respectable men, who were filled with horror at the very thought of Chartism and socialism, showed deep respect for the Crown and Church and were too downtrodden to hate the industrial bourgeoisie; all they were still capable of was humble reverence for the aristocracy, who at least deigned to take an interest in their wretched plight.[43]

Engels felt that the movement was echoing the earlier opposition of workers to industrial progress, such as Luddism, and was aimed at re-establishing former patriarchal conditions and relationships.

For Marxists, the length of the working day and hence the amount of free time enjoyed by workers is a fundamental part of the class struggle. Marx himself attached considerable importance to the struggle of British workers for shorter working hours. He regarded the organised action of the workers as essential, because the legislation of 1847 and 1850 (Ten Hour Act) was an outcome of the political struggle between the landed and industrial bourgeoisie; it was not prompted by their desire to improve the lot of the

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[42] Engels, The English Ten Hours Bill, op cit, p98

[43] Ibid

workers.[44] Marx believed that the economic class struggle had an inherent tendency to become political. The struggle to secure legislation limiting the length of the working day was an example of this.

This struggle was the product of a protracted and more or less concealed civil war between the capitalist class and the working class, achieved by the state passing a law, even though without the working men's continuous pressure from without that legislative interference would never have been possible. In this example, according to Alex Callinicos, the two forms of struggle, economic and political, interacted with each other.[45] For workers, with nothing to sell but their labour power which itself has become a commodity, the only way that they can continue to sell it day in and day out for the whole of their working lives is to have sufficient time available to reproduce that labour power. During a day of twenty-four hours, a human being can only expend a certain definite quantity of vital energy. Part of the day must be reserved for rest, sleep and other bodily needs. Marx, in Capital published in 1867, says that the worker should take care to make a reasonable and thrifty use of his sole possession, his labour power, and be careful to avoid squandering it. If a worker is to be capable of working with the normal measure of energy, health and freshness, apart from the wear and tear associated with advancing years, he or she must set only so much labour power in motion as is compatible with its normal duration and healthy development. If the capitalist were to prolong

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[44] Z A Jordan, Karl Marx: Economy Class and Social Revolution, Ottawa, 1971, p315

[45] Alex Callinicos, The Revolutionary Ideas of Karl Marx, London, 1983, p149

the working day immeasurably, a point would be reached where in one day the amount of labour power used may exceed what can be replaced in three days. This would thereby rob the worker of labour power.[46] The capitalist will have robbed the worker of two thirds of the value of his or her only commodity if three days' labour power is consumed in one day's duration.[47]

This theory seems to suppose that the worker is potentially available everyday of the year with no days off whatsoever which seems unlikely, even in 1867. According to the interpretation of the sociologist, Z A Jordan:

> Since man is never in a position to become entirely emancipated from work, he can gain freedom only in so far as he is capable of restricting as much as possible the determination of his whole life by this necessity, by being under its control instead of being controlled by it".[48]

The harmful and disadvantageous effects of an advanced technology can be allayed by the reduction of working hours, argued Jordan, and the increase and creative use of leisure.

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[46] Marx attempted to express this as an equation. If the average working life is 30 years, then the value of labour power which is paid for daily is *I / 365 x 30* or *I / 10,950* of its total value. If all the potential labour power is consumed within ten years then the worker will have been paid daily *I / 10,950* instead of *I / 3,650* of its total value.

[47] Karl Marx, Capital, Vol 1, 1867, Everyman's Library Edition, pub 1930, p232

[48] Z A Jordan, op cit, p53

The length of the working day is not a constant but a variable magnitude. At its minimum it must produce enough value to cover the costs of the labour power's reproduction but if production is for profit then this minimum will not suffice the capitalist. In Capital, Marx illustrates his point on the limit of the working day by dividing the working day into two periods.[49] The first period represents the duration of necessary labour time to produce the means of subsistence. After this has been reached then a second period of what Marx calls surplus labour comes into effect. The second period is the variable component. During this time the worker is working for the benefit of the capitalist to produce surplus value which is determined by the ratio of surplus working time divided by necessary working time. If the rate of surplus value was a hundred per cent then the two periods of the working day would be of equal length, however, this does not tell us the actual length of the day.

As well as the physical limitations which must be imposed on the length of the working day there are also mental or moral limitations. The worker needs time for the satisfaction of mental and social wants, whose comprehensiveness and number are determined by the general level of civilisation in which he or she lives. In his commentary on Capital, Engels noted that the maximum limit of labour time is always affected by moral grounds, but the limit is very elastic. "The economic demand is that the working-day should be longer than for normal wear and tear of the worker. But what is normal? An antimony results and only force can decide. Hence the

[49] Marx, Capital, op cit, p230

struggle between the working class and the capitalist class for the normal working-day".[50]

For Marx, the amount of hours worked, and therefore the amount of leisure and holiday time are capable of considerable variation. This variation occurs within both physical and social limits. It is culturally determined and part of the class struggle as if the worker consumes his disposable time for his own purposes he is denying that time to the capitalist.

> In the history of capitalist production, the decision as to what is the normal length of the working day presents itself in the form of a struggle as to the defining of the limits of the working day - a struggle between the capitalist and the working classes.[51]

As industrialisation progressed and new and more efficient machinery came into use then the rate of exploitation increased. Therefore the amount of surplus value that could be extracted from each worker's labour power increased at a corresponding rate. Productivity had increased sufficiently by the twentieth century for industry to be able to grant shorter working hours and holidays without any major loss of profit. The period of time needed for necessary labour became shorter. As the intensity of work increased, the worker needed longer to reproduce his or her labour power. This represents an increase in the rate of exploitation. The granting of holidays with pay therefore poses no conflict with Marx's economic analysis. In fact, as argued

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[50] Frederick Engels, On Marx's Capital, Moscow, 1976 edition, p78

[51] Marx, Capital, p235

by Jordan, Marx maintained that leisure, which he defined as both spare time and the time devoted to higher activities, could transform the worker into a different individual. The true economy consisted in the saving of labour time which reduced the cost and increased the forces of production. The saving in labour time, entirely appropriated by the capitalist, should be used to extend the free time of the worker.[52]

The need by workers for time in which to replenish their mental and physical capacity, was not an idea confined to Marx and his cohorts but was also recognised by middle-class reformers. They conducted their arguments in terms of improved health and education, which would lead to more efficiency and higher productivity levels. Recognised holiday periods could also be used by employers as a means of disciplining workers, who might receive time off in return for good attendance and time keeping throughout the rest of the year. As well as being of value in their own right, leisure time and holidays could be part of a functionalist or utilitarian perspective.

As living standards rose after 1850, then working-class culture itself began to change. Greater security raised people's expectations and a greater emphasis was placed on the importance of family life. Sunday dinner, clothing and, later, holidays became part of the working-class lifestyle. By the mid-1870s, the ability to save up money had become, for an increasing number, a feature of working-class life; the virtues of thrift which in the harsher times of the 1830s and 1840s had been vital for survival were now, in changed economic circumstances, turned to more profitable

[52] Z A Jordan, op cit, p54

and pleasurable ends.[53] It is from this period that the first Wakes Savings Clubs in the north west of England date. It is important to emphasise here the contrast between skilled workers, the unskilled and the "poor". Obviously this new respectability was not available equally to all the working class. Only those skilled workers able to command a relatively high price for their labour and who could obtain some job security were able to afford such lifestyles. However, expectations had been raised to such an extent that "the inability to afford such pleasures did not prevent the poor from believing that they had a right to enjoy them; leisure as a natural aspiration of life became a major feature of English society, as turn-of-the-century social investigators such as Booth were surprised to discover".[54] In order to enjoy an annual trip to the seaside, the poorest of families were prepared to resort to petty social crime in order to attain their goal. In his study of working-class childhood, based on oral history research, Stephen Humphries found that in the 1930s, lacking the rail fare, mothers would go with their children to the station and wait until there was a big crowd on the platform. They would sneak behind them past the ticket inspector both on the way there and back.[55] At no time do those describing their early experiences show that they thought they were doing anything that was wrong according to their own values. Seaside holidays were often unattainable luxuries, especially for families with young children. By the 1930s the rise of the seaside holiday may have caused feelings of deprivation to

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[53] James Walvin, Leisure and Society 1830-1950, London, 1978, p61

[54] Walvin, op cit, p63

[55] Stephen Humphries, Hooligans or Rebels? An Oral History of Working-Class Childhood and Youth 1889-1939, Oxford, second edition, 1995, p166

be sharpened for those unable to afford one. While some working-class families were enjoying new levels of affluence and acquired status symbols such as gramophones, wirelesses and holidays, those trapped in the poverty cycle or unemployment were made to be acutely aware that they were missing out.[56]

The better-off group of workers, claimed by some socilaists to have been bought-off from militancy and class conciousness by access to material goods and other relative privileges, has been labelled the Labour Aristocracy and has been accused of having abandoned working-class values and imitating the middle class in life style and outlook. An important difference remained though between the affluent section of the working class and the lower middle class; the labour aristocracy was still collectivist rather than individualistic in its outlook and politics. Militancy was more likely to be found among the better off than the poorest groups of workers, some relatively privileged sections of the working class, such as the engineers, were often among the most militant.[57] Trade Union membership was high amongst this group, as was involvement in the co-operative movement. The group's high level of trade union membership focussed on a separate identity to the middle class, one of potential conflict. Even those organisations viewed favourably by the middle class such as friendly societies and co-operatives, reflected the collectivism of labour and had a meaning different from that attributed by

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[56] Andrew Davies, Leisure, Gender and Poverty - Working-class culture in Salford and Manchester 1900-1939, Buckingham, 1992, p42

[57] Stuart Macintyre, A Proletarian Science, London, 1986, p210

middle-class commentators on social improvement.[58] Even the most prosperous sections of the working class faced the danger of falling into chronic poverty because of illness, injury or the instabilities of the economy. Their collective organisation and mutual insurance arose from attempts to guard against that danger.[59] Respectable behaviour should be understood in this context, that it was related to problems of survival and to the self-discipline imposed by the conditions of industrial labour, not an imitation of middle-class ideals.

As early as 1851, Engels began to detect the emergence of such a group when he wrote in a letter to Marx, that the English bourgeoisie were "making use of the prosperity or semi-prosperity to buy the proletariat".[60] His later remark that the English working class was actually becoming more and more bourgeois was likely to refer largely to its acceptance of ruling class ideology at a time of defeat and should not be taken literally as meaning that actual embourgeoisment took place.[61] The purpose of the remark seems to be to imply disapproval of the passivity of the English working class and its organisations. As working-class political activity increased again in the 1860s and 1870s, less references were made to the phenomenon but in the 1880s Engels returned to the theme repeatedly. He

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[58] Robert Gray, op cit, p42

[59] Ibid

[60] Engels, letter to Marx, 3 Feb 1851, Marx and Engels Works, Berlin, 1956-68, Vol 27, p180

[61] Kevin Corr and Andy Brown, The Labour Aristocracy and the Roots of Reformism, International Socialism Journal, No 59, June 1993, pp37-74, p43

described England as "a country in which the working class has shared more than anywhere else in the advantages of the immense expansion of large scale industry. Nor could it have been otherwise in an England that ruled the world market".[62] This explanatory sentence indicates that Engels saw the rise of this relatively privileged section was based in the material circumstances of the time rather than in cultural or ideological factors. Although he linked England's economic and commercial position with the corruption of English workers, he is not explicit about how this corruption and bribery actually occurs nor exactly which group of workers are the beneficiaries. Sometimes it is implied that the corruption had sunk deep into the ranks of the workers but usually it appears that he is referring only to the trade union bureaucracy and leaders of the movement.[63]

In the preface to the 1892 English edition of the Condition of the Working Class in England, Engels, describing the craft unions such as the engineers, bricklayers, carpenters and joiners, said that their position has so much improved since 1848 that for fifteen years they have been on good terms with their employers.

> They form an aristocracy among the working class; they have succeeded in enforcing for themselves a relatively comfortable position, and they accept it as final. They are the model workingmen.... and they are very nice people indeed nowadays to deal with, for any

[62] Engels, letter to Marx, 3 Feb 1851, op cit, p180

[63] Corr and Brown, op cit, p44

sensible capitalist in particular and for the whole capitalist class in general.[64]

This does not mean that this privileged group was no longer part of the working class. They were seen as taking the lead of the working-class movement generally through their involvement in "new unionism", and more and more taking in tow the rich and proud "old" unions.[65] This section of workers was able to secure for itself, through its strong collective organisation, a more financially secure and privileged position in relation to other groups. As profits were so high, rather than risk loss of production through industrial disputes, employers were keen to make concessions and pay high wages. In his book, Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism, Lenin argued that:

> The receipt of high monopoly profits by the capitalists… makes it economically possible for them to bribe certain sections of the workers, and for a time a considerable minority of them, and win them to the side of the bougeoisie of a given industry or given nation against all others…. This stratum of workers-turned bourgeois, or the labour aristocracy, who are quite philistine in their mode of life, in the size of their earnings, and in their entire outlook, is the principal… social prop of the bourgeoisie.[66]

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[64] Frederick Engels, The Condition of the Working Class in England, 1892, London 1969 edition, p31

[65] Engels, ibid, p35

[66] V I Lenin, from Imperialism the Highset Stage of Capitalism, quoted by Tony Cliff in Lenin, Volume 2, All Power to the Soviets, London, 1976, pp58-59

Lenin's motive in writing this work, according to the socialist writer Tony Cliff, was to criticise the deterministic Marxism of the German, Kautsky.[67] The theory was set in contradiction to that of Kautsky who presented the belief that modern capitalism may lead to world unity of capitalists and hence an end to wars. Lenin was later to argue that the superprofits of Imperialism, was the origin of reformism amongst the working class.[68] If this was the case then it seems strange that the holidaymaking tradition did not originate with this group of workers but within the northern cotton industry and this question will be investigated further in Chapter Four. In his preface Engels, who knew the cotton industry extremely well, gives a clue to the reasons for this. As well as members of the craft unions gaining a permanent improvement in their position another group enjoying protected status was the factory hands.

> Restriction of the length of the working day within rational limits had restored their physical constitution and endowed them with a moral superiority, enhanced by their local concentration.[69]

Nine out of ten strikes, Engels explained, were provoked by the manufacturers in their own interests in order to secure reduced production and to prevent stockpiling of unsaleable goods. This desire to avoid over-production could explain

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[67] Tony Cliff, op cit, p59

[68] V I Lenin, Imperialism - the Highest Stage of Capitalism, in Selected Works, p683

[69] Engels, Condition of the Working Class in England, op cit, p31

why cotton factory hands were able to secure a full week's holiday long before other sections of the working class. It also gives it a materialist foundation rather than a purely cultural or ideological one. The ability of cotton workers to secure a holiday before other sections of the working class, even those with higher earnings and a more "respectable" identity, was due to a combination of cultural expectation, tradition and collectivity reinforced by the economic need to avoid over-production.

A period of unprecedented growth in the leisure industry took place from the 1870s onwards. The factory became the dominant form of industrial organisation, this and the growth of mines and railways swelled the intermediate strata of the working class who benefitted from falling prices between 1873 and 1896. As James Hinton argued:

> Better clothed, better shod and, after the 1890s building boom, better housed, the prospect of a richer and more varied life outside work opened up to large numbers of workers and their families.[70]

The average working week was probably around 56 to 57 hours, compared with between 60 and 72 hours in the mid-Victorian years, giving more time for leisure and domestic life, although some of this time was taken up by increased travelling due to the growth in size of towns. With more money to spend and more leisure time, working-class people could construct a new family and consumption-centred culture, with bicycles, pianos and spectator sports as well

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[70] James Hinton, Labour and Socialism - A History of the British Labour Movement 1867-1974, Brighton, 1983, p27

as seaside excursions.[71] As opportunities to participate in commercialised leisure increased and the numbers taking a seaside holiday or day excursion mounted, then the expectation of the right to enjoy leisure grew accordingly. Charities organised trips to the seaside or countryside for the poor, especially children.[72] Saturday afternoons by the last quarter of the nineteenth century were free in most industries apart from the retail trade. Moves towards a half-day of work on Saturday had begun in the textile factories with the Factory Act of 1833. After further legislation in 1850, work in mines finished at 2 o'clock on Saturday thereby setting a precedent for other industrial workers in future years. With slow and uneven progress, voluntary agreements spread the trend to trades not covered by legislative measures. Engineers in Birmingham won the concession between 1852 and 1856. In Liverpool engineers achieved it in the 1850s but the half-day did not reach other industies until the 1870s, for the unskilled it was not achieved until the 1880s.[73] The importance of the Saturday half-holiday to working people was described by the Manchester autodidact, Thomas Wright:

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[71] Hinton, op cit, pp27-28

[72] At Ashton under Lyne, workhouse inmates were treated to a visit to the Wakes fair, with all amusements free of charge. Sweets, chocolate, coconuts and ice cream were given to them and the treat was rounded off by a visit to the cinema. The Treat was financed by showmen and shopkeepers and supervised by the local police. (from the Asthon Under Lyne Reporter, 20 August 1932). A holiday home for poor children from Leicester was established at Mablethorpe in 1899 and has survived as a charity for over a century.

[73] James Walvin, Beside the Seaside, London, 1978, pp 54-55

> It is now a stock saying with many working men, that Saturday is the best day of the week, as it is a short working day and Sunday has to come… When the bell rings the men leave the works in a leisurely way that contrasts rather strongly with the eagerness with which they leave at other times; but once outside the workshop gates, the younger apprentices and other boys immediately devote themselves to the business of pleasure.[74]

Also by the latter quarter of the century, a growing but unquantifiable minority of workers, especially in the Lancashire cotton towns,[75] were able to secure a week off work in the summer, even if it was unpaid. Lack of union strength made commercial workers, especially in shops, the hardest worked with the least holidays. In redressing the balance between commercial and industrial workers, Sir John Lubbock's Bank Holidays Act of 1870 guaranteed "that no person shall be compelled to do anything on a Bank Holiday which he could not be compelled to do on Christmas Day or Good Friday".[76] Despite evidence given to the Select Committee on Bank Holidays, that in a major proportion of banks clerks already received a fortnight's holiday rising to three weeks after twenty years' service, in addition to the traditional religious holidays, legislation was passed stipulating that on certain days all banks would be closed and bills due for clearance would become payable the day

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[74] Thomas Wright, The Journeyman Engineer, quoted by James Walvin, op cit, p55

[75] John Walton, The English Seaside Resort, A Social History 1750-1914, Leicester, 1983, pp32-34

[76] From James Walvin, Beside the Seaside, op cit, p60

after.[77] By providing an extra day's holiday on Boxing Day (the day after Christmas Day) and on the first Monday in August, this innocuous sounding piece of legislation thereby established the now typical pattern of English holiday making. It was unexpectedly responsible for encouraging the growing national urge to rush to the seaside.[78] The Bank Holiday Act was particularly advantageous to the unorganised labour force in the commercial sector. Shop workers especially gained as their working hours were long and their protracted struggle, through the Early Closing Association, for a weekly half-holiday continued up until the First World War before meeting with any success.[79] In the case of shops there was no absolute necessity for them to close on Bank Holidays yet throughout the greater part of the country the Act was put into operation.[80] The Bank Holiday established early August as the main period for taking holidays in most areas, especially in areas with no traditional wakes week.

Holidaymaking, although still a luxury, had become part of the expectations of mainstream English working-class culture, by 1914.[81] During the period immediately following the end of the war in 1918 many organised groups of workers

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[77] Index to the Report of the Select Committee on Bank Holidays, 1868, p5

[78] Walvin, op cit, p64

[79] Wilfred B Whitaker, Victorian and Edwardian Shop Workers, Newton Abbott, 1973, p178

[80] Report of the Select Committee on Factory and Workshops Extension (Shop Hours of Opening) Act, 10 March 1886

[81] J A R Pimlott, The Englishman's Holiday, Hassocks, Sussex, 1976 edition, pp212-213; Stephen G Jones, Workers at Play - A Social and Economic History of Leisure 1918-1939, London, 1986, p15

secured holidays with pay through the collective bargaining process for the first time. With the onset of recession and the defeat of the General Strike in 1926, the majority of workers had to wait until the late 1930s to secure the same right. During the 1930s, the Labour Party developed its reformist policies in preparation for when it became elected. The Trades Union Congress in response to industrial defeat after the General Strike and disappointment in the second Labour Government of 1931, developed a corporate bias and a conciliatory and consultative role with employers and the government.[82] Both the Labour Party and the unions were more interested in class collaboration than class conflict.[83] In the depths of depression neither Government nor employers had much motive to consult the weakened trade unions.[84] Citrine of the TUC, emphasised the research function of its General Council and the need for patient lobbying of the Government which resulted in TUC representation on a number of Parliamentary Committees. Notably, one of these committees was that on Holidays with Pay that strengthened the campaign and which probably would not have been established without trade union pressure.[85] The narrowly electoral politics of the Labour Party grew at the expense of extra-parliamentary forms of action.[86]

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[82] Hinton, op cit, p128

[83] Stephen G Jones, The British Labour Movement and Working Class Leisure, 1918-1939, PhD Thesis, University of Manchester, 1983, p86

[84] Hinton, op cit, p150

[85] Hinton, ibid

[86] Hinton, op cit, p130

During the 1920s the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) had been small but although excluded from official influence it had been able to exert a greater influence than its size would suggest because of its effective organisation acting through the National Minority Movement, the National Unemployed Workers' Committees, and the Left Wing Movement. This influence declined with the onset of the party's sectarian policy in 1929, which lasted until the mid-1930s.

By the time that the demand for holidays with pay was on the mainstream political agenda in the 1930s there were within the working class movement two main political outlooks in the campaign, the reformist (Labour Party followers) and the revolutionary (Communist Party of Great Britain, the CPGB). In addition these were countered by the attempts of the establishment to manipulate working-class leisure as a means of social control or exploiting collectivist tradition for commercial gains. It is essential to understand the relationship between working-class culture, reformist and revolutionary socialist theories and political and actual practice when looking at leisure and holidays. By the 1930s, the campaign for paid holidays united the two strands of the British labour movement. Both the reformists of the Labour Party and the revolutionary left, mainly in the Communist Party of Great Britain, agreed with the principle of holidays with pay for all workers. The timing of the main thrust of the official campaign in the mid-1930s coincided with the Communist Party's abandonment of the extreme sectarianism of Stalinism's so-called "third period".[87] During this time, according to Stalin and the

[87] Leon Trotsky, What Next?, written in 1932 from Fascism, Stalinism and the United Front, 1930-34, International Socialism reprint, 1969, p28

Comintern's official policy, the world was entering a revolutionary phase but workers were being held back by the reformist Social Democratic and Labour Parties who were therefore, supposedly, the main enemy of the working class and would deliver them in to the arms of fascism. This ultra-leftist line was declared by the Executive Committee of the Communist International at its Tenth Plenum in 1929:

> In countries where there are strong social-democratic parties, fascism assumes the particular form of social fascism, which to an ever increasing extent serves the bourgeoisie as an instrument for paralysing the activity of the masses in the struggle against the regime of fascist dictatorship.[88]

The Communist Party referred to the reformist parties as "social fascists" during this period which lasted from 1928 until about 1937 when there was a switch to a Popular Front policy with the slogan "Peace, Freedom, Democracy", which attempted to emphasise what all workers' organisations had in common. On the massive May Day march in London in 1938 at the time the Parliamentary Committee on Holidays with Pay was working, there was a float decorated to publicise the campaign, a symbol of how far the idea of holidays had become part of mainstream working-class culture.[89]

In the Labour Party in the 1930s and 1940s, the debate could be portrayed as an attempt to create efficiency that would

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[88] Tenth Plenum of the ECCI, quoted by Duncan Hallas, Trotsky's Marxism, London, 1979, p67

[89] "Advance Democracy" (film) dir Ralph Bond, Co-op Film Unit, 1938

allow people to take greater charge of their lives.[90] A central feature of the Party's thinking in this period was equality, justified by the desire to release the potential within people. Following the 1931 election, trade unionists predominated in the Parliamentary Party, half of them were sponsored by the Miners' Federation alone.[91] The Labour Party Conference demanded that any future Labour Government must undertake "definite socialist legislation". From 1934 onwards, plans were formulated to nationalise major industries and for emergency powers to resist ruling-class opposition.[92] There was some disagreement within the Party over priorities. Some felt that public ownership and physical planning were imperative; others believed that redistribution of material rewards through taxation was sufficient; others stressed a more qualitative vision of socialist fellowship.[93] The problem faced by the Labour Party was that, despite its intentions to promote equality and social participation with its policies, to enable the vast majority of producers to share in a classless society offering individual moral improvement, material prosperity and equality were prerequisites.[94] The Labour Party developed its own social strategy which included improved leisure facilities such as swimming pools, amenities in parks, recreation grounds and so on to be established during its second period of government. Unlike the Communists,

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[90] M J Daunton, Payment and Participation: Welfare and State Formation in Britain 1900-1951, Past and Present, No 150, February 1996, pp169..216, p212

[91] Hinton, op cit, p148

[92] Hinton, op cit, p149

[93] Daunton, op cit, p210

[94] Daunton, op cit, p212

Labour did not see leisure as part of a wider materialist world but, as Frank Betts writing in the New Leader put it, "an ethical foundation for joy".[95] When the Labour Party adopted its "socialist" constitution in 1918, it was believed that the state should develop access to cultural pursuits for all. The Constitution called for the state to actively brighten "the lives of those now condemned to almost ceaseless toil" by "a great development of the means of recreation".[96] Leisure was an outlet for individual choice away from the dictates of work, essential to body and mind. There were few attempts made to see leisure in relation to the dominant mode of production, ultimately determined by the capitalist order of society - the leisure question was never linked to a systematic overview of the capitalist way of life as a whole. According to Stephen G Jones' thesis, Labour identified the role of workers' organisations as being to fight for a fair share of leisure and to extract benefits from the capitalist system. This was symptomatic of the labour movement's political shift to the left, in terms of rhetoric, but mirrored in practical terms by its industrial weakness. Trade unions were the vehicles for the construction of social reform, firstly by campaigning for paid holidays, the forty-hour week and other leisure demands. Only then, if at all, were they to consider the creation of a society which could guarantee fair shares of leisure for all. As Jones writes:

> Although not precluding the need for socialism, the labour argument for the shorter working week was based

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[95] Jones, op cit, p93

[96] Chris Waters, British Socialists and the Politics of Popular Culture, Manchester, 1990, pp154-155

> on the reformist premise that, with capitalist prosperity, benefits would percolate through the system into the palms of the workers - a premise to some extent evidenced by the increase in real wages, reduction in hours and the expansion of capitalist leisure forms for those in work. It was not the overt task of the Labour Socialist, so it seems, to overthrow the society that others on the left suggested restricted the quality and quantity of leisure, but rather to secure labour its just rewards out of capitalism.[97]

Leisure was viewed as a palliative to the excesses of capitalist production and not something to be demanded in its own right. This view clearly accepts the dominant institutions and existing order in society. In 1938 the TUC president and secretary of the National Union of Clerks and Administrative Workers, Herbert Elvin, felt that a Ministry of Leisure would best serve working-class people.[98] A new economic system based on need and not profit was not a prerequisite for real gains in workers' leisure: capital could be reformed and concede benefits to the working class.

Although the Communist Party was totally opposed to capitalism it was not above reformism as a political tactic. Leisure and holidays should be the right of all workers. The Party demanded two weeks holidays with pay even during its sectarian period. In its general election programme of 1929, entitled Class Against Class, two of the demands which the Party put forward to solve the unemployment problem were

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[97] Jones, op cit, p94

[98] Jones, op cit, p95

the establishment of a seven hour day and a fortnight's holiday per year with pay.[99] The importance placed on these demands relating to length of time spent at work, is emphasised in their positioning within the manifesto as the top two points of the twelve categories of the programme, above housing, social legislation, education, taxation and the fight against a probable future war.[100] This prominence was because greater control in the workplace by workers was seen as a key part of the defensive strategy against the capitalist offensive.

Revolutionary socialists realised that the dominant mode of production depressed the cultural level of the masses. Capitalism had made everything a commodity, a source of profit. People had become consumers of culture rather than partners in its production. A socialist system of production would produce more free time together with better recreational and cultural facilities which could not happen under a capitalist system. The Communist newspaper, the Daily Worker proclaimed that:

> It is the capitalist ownership of the land, industries and banks which is preventing the development of wealth-producing power in order to provide wealth and leisure for all workers. ....Decaying parasitic capitalism had to be wiped out and replaced by a planned socialist economy.[101]

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[99] Class Against Class, The General Election Programme of the Communist Party of Great Britain, London, 1929, pp 22-23

[100] Class Against Class, op cit, pp 22-33

[101] Daily Worker, 31 March 1934, p2

Under the influence of Stalinism, without the benefit of hindsight, the Soviet Union's planned economy was eulogised by the CPGB and became a model of a state that provided good leisure facilities and time to enjoy them for all workers. The Soviet Union's promotion of leisure activities acceptable to the regime such as sport and domestic involvement was part of its propaganda both internal and external as it sought to invoke an image of the equality, health and happiness only socialism could give to its citizens.[102] This uncritical acceptance of all things Soviet, ignoring their context, weakened the Party which isolated itself by failing to recognise the reality and complexity of leisure preferences. In Britain the Communist Party allowed itself to become marginalised as it failed to recognise that some features of capitalist leisure, such as the cinema, were actually popular with workers. They gained little credibility amongst British workers when they argued that all workers in the Soviet Union were better off than those in Britain.[103] The Communist Party was prepared to accept palliatives under capitalism and agreed that holidays could improve the quality of life even under an exploitive economic system. As indicated in the electoral programme put forward in Class Against Class, reforms could be part of a Marxist strategy related to the ultimate creation of a socialist society. When criticising the Communist Parties during their sectarian period, Trotsky referring to the

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[102] A feature article entitled "Britain's Youth Want a Charter for Health and Leisure" appeared on page 4 of the Daily Worker of 21 May 1937, accompanied by a photograph of a group of long-distance runners in Moscow. The caption for this picture was "Youth HAVE opportunities for leisure and health in the Soviet Union".

[103] Jones, op cit, p101

situation in England where he felt that non-Communists could not be brought into the struggle except through the policy of the United Front, said that this revolutionary dialectic had been demonstrated in countless spheres

> By correlating the struggle for power with the struggle for reforms; by maintaining complete independence of the party while preserving the unity of the trade unions; by fighting against the bourgeois regime and at the same time utilising its institutions; by criticising relentlessly parliamentarianism - from the parliamentary tribunal; by waging war mercilessly against reformism, and at the same time making practical agreements in partial struggles.[104]

From this analysis it is apparent that there is no contradiction between the struggle for reforms and the long term goal of socialist revolution, providing reforms are not substituted for class struggle, but become a means of raising the level of workers' class consciousness during campaigns for their achievement. When addressing the British Youth Peace assembly in 1937, Vincent Duncan Jones, secretary of the Youth Charter Group, called for a forty hour maximum working-week, a minimum wage scale for sixteen to twenty-one year olds and two weeks annual holiday with pay. In his speech to the two hundred and fifty enthusiastic delegates and observers of the assembly, Jones proclaimed that:

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[104] Leon Trotsky, What Next?, written in 1932 from Fascism, Stalinism, and the United Front, 1930-34, International Socialism reprint, 1969, p28

> The profits of industry are higher than they have been for years. Fifteen hundred companies last year increased their profits over 1932 by more than one half. Millions and scores of millions of pounds are going into shareholders' pockets today.
>
> Young men, told that industry would collapse if they were given two weeks' annual paid holiday, see every day plans and pictures of "Southern cruises" undertaken by sons of the rich.[105]

By working with non-Communists towards a common goal, be it holidays with pay or higher wages, Communists could influence them and hopefully win them over to revolutionary politics through their example as the best activists. For this reason, revolutionaries became involved in the struggle for paid holidays and other reforms not solely for the primary objective of securing a vacation but also to influence and to gain a position to lead the working-class movement.

The spread of the annual holiday and other forms of commercialised leisure amongst the working class during the period from the late nineteenth century to the 1950s demonstrates the change from a patchwork of cultural traditions which varied regionally to a more uniform urban culture spread over England as a whole. As discussed earlier in this chapter, historians such as Edward Thompson, viewed the suppression of popular "traditional" leisure pursuits as an attack on plebian culture by the capitalist

[105] Daily Worker, 21 May 1937, p4

class.[106] These attacks were part of an ongoing process of consolidation of bourgeois rule through social control. The Italian Marxist, Antonio Gramsci described this process as the consolidation of bourgeois hegemony, in which popular culture is seen as an area of exchange between the culture and ideology of the dominant class in society and the cultures and ideology of the subordinate classes. This cultural and social superstructure contributes to the defence of the bourgeois state that consists of both political and civil society. In other words the ruling class uses its hegemony as a means of persuading the subordinate classes to accept its domination. This hegemony is itself protected by the armour of coercion should it fail to have the required stabilising influence.[107] Holidays and leisure can be seen as part of the apparatus of bourgeois hegemonic control, a palliative within the state superstructure, to make workers feel they have a stake in existing society. Modern capitalist societies are described allegorically by Gramsci as a system of defences in which "the State is only an outer ditch, behind which are stood a powerful system of fortresses and earthworks: more or less numerous from one State to the next".[108] However, this theory raises the question of a dialectic in that attempts to control freetime and secure more of it in the form of paid holidays takes the form of a political struggle and so exposes states to class conflict generated through this struggle. This formed part of the motivation of revolutionary socialists when campaigning for reforms in the

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[106] E P Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class, op cit, pp 441-451

[107] Antonio Gramsci, Selections from Prison Notebooks, London, 1971, p263

[108] Gramsci, ibid, p238

shape of shorter working hours and paid annual holidays[109]. What activities and demands are seen as challenging to the ruling elites constantly changes over time. Capital is capable of making concessions without jeopardising its own hegemony. Throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, popular leisure activities when pursued by the lower orders were perceived by the ruling classes as a threat to public order and social stability, as was the belief of the early nineteenth century Society for the Suppression of Vice[110]. By the end of the nineteenth century these activities were no longer seen in this way. In his book on the history of manners, the German, Norbert Elias described this change in behaviour and attitudes towards it as a civilising process.

> The standard of what society demands and prohibits changes; in conjunction with this, the threshold of socially instilled displeasure and fear moves: and the question of sociogenic fears thus emerges as one of the central problems of the civilising process.[111]

The working-class crowd was no longer a threat to society but an economic opportunity and, taking advantage of this opportunity, commercialised leisure had expanded into a mass industry. Popular demand was contained by commercialisation which provided its own controls where the attempts of moral reformers and rational recreationists had failed. From the point of view of authority, this commercialised leisure was

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[109] See Class Against Class, op cit

[110] E P Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class, ibid

[111] Norbert Elias, The Civilising Process, (1938) Oxford edition, 1994, p xii

increasingly acceptable, for what was offered, although hardly uplifting, posed no social threat. On the contrary, leisure was shorn of many of its political and social associations, and while the way it was spent might be individually damaging, it was no longer politically or socially dangerous.[112]

1.3 Time and Space as Commodities

In the 1920s it was widely believed that free time, not the endless increase in consumption, would be a consequence of economic growth. The application of Fordism and Taylorism to industrial production as well as technological advances meant that production could be rationalised through the effective use of labour.[113] More could be produced in less time, meaning that industry could reduce working hours and grant more holidays to workers without loss of productivity. Everyone working for fewer hours, sharing the benefits of cheap, mass-produced consumer goods could eradicate unemployment and the problems of overproduction. This would also create a mass leisure society and undermine the work ethic. It was assumed that people only had limited needs and once these were satisfied they would be content to spend more time on their own interests. In her history of working-class women in Lancashire, Elizabeth Roberts found in oral testimony from and about early twentieth century working-wives that it was clear they had an ideal income that could clothe, feed and house the family and leave a surplus for savings. Once the ideal was reached it was more

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[112] Cunningham, quote from Golby and Purdue, The Civilisation of the Crowd, London, 1984, p195

[113] Eric Hobsbawm, The Age of Empire 1875-1914, London, 1987, p45

important to have less work than more money.[114] The demand for the eight-hour day after World War One seemed to prove this point, as did the push for the forty-hour week standard in the 1930s. The campaign for holidays with pay became a symbol of a social solidarity to be realised in leisure beyond the control of the market and state.[115] Technological advances, it was perceived, would also contribute to the democratisation of leisure and holiday opportunities. A newspaper editorial written in 1925, predicting the future of holidays by 1935, mistakenly foresaw that:

> Speed has so conquered space in this marvellous age that by 1935 there will be a wonderful revolution in holidaymaking opportunities.[116]

The article predicted cheap air travel available to all by that year, including the "man in the street".

> The romance of travel and adventure described in novels or depicted on the films will be superseded by the romance of experience. It will be possible for an Englishman in his normal summer holidays, to visit the remotest corners of the world, opening up for him the whole panorama of its great and varied beauty.[117]

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[114] Elizabeth Roberts, A Woman's Place - An Oral History of Working-class Women, 1890-1940, Oxford, 1984, p142

[115] Gary Cross, Time and Money - The Making of Consumer Culture, London and New York, 1993, pp7-8

[116] Leicester Mercury, 1 August 1925

[117] Ibid

The vision of contentment through increased freetime with all other needs fulfilled, never became reality. From the 1930s and especially in the years after the end of the Second World War, Gary Cross argued that increased output came to be seen as the means towards prosperity for all and more time for leisure was only of secondary importance. High wages gained a priority over reduced working hours as a way to distribute economic growth. The demand for the forty-hour week became a trade-off for intensified monotonous work and for adequate rest to sustain vigour.[118] Gary Cross summarises this significant alteration in values which began in America, thus:

> Within the context of early twentieth century capitalism, the politics of free time could be understood as anti-progressive: demanding shorter hours in order to combat overproduction suggested a goal of economic constraint, a limits-of-growth ideology; and business critics were correct to point out the conservative objective of preserving the occupational status quo. By contrast, the politics of money was forward looking, implying growth and material fulfilment. The fact that both were fruits of productivity with legitimate, if conflicting, claims was obscured.[119]

Beginning in the mid-nineteenth and in the twentieth century especially, the growth of the consumer society and commercialisation of many forms of leisure has created limitless needs for workers who are faced with an ever-

[118] Gary Cross, op cit, p79

[119] Ibid

expanding choice of commodities to purchase. The American, Sebastian de Grazzia raises the paradox of workers who claim to want more free-time and yet clamour for more and more overtime with its higher rates of pay.[120] Clearly for these people the attraction of more money is greater than that of more free time. This could reflect not just the issue of consumer preference excercised by workers when presented with a choice of commodities to purchase but could also be symptomatic of low pay.

1.4 Conclusion

The traditional working-class holiday developed through a combination of class struggle, reformism and popular culture. Whether or not it has been imposed in a regulated form on the class from outside as a means of social control or has evolved from an intrinsic class culture, it is still a product of capitalist society. Although a highly popular institution, for the mass of workers it is therefore a product of alienation rather than an understanding of society. Like other aspects of capitalist ideology though, individuals can choose, adapt or reject parts which appeal to them after interpretation in the experience of their own objective reality. The following chapters will look at how some groups of socialists, reformers and workers themselves attempted to organise holidays in a way which tried to provide alternatives to alienation and to counterpoise the dominant bourgeois culture, either through opposition, the expression of indigenous working-class values or by emphasising workers' ability to act responsibly.

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[120] Sebastian de Grazzia, Of Work, Time and Leisure, New York, 1962, pp139-140

CHAPTER 2

NO GRAND TOURS - Early Working-class Travel

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter a number of theoretical perspectives on holidays and leisure were discussed. This next section will look at the earliest travel arrangements made by working people. Even in Medieval times, pilgrimages had given the opportunity to travel for outwardly justifiable religious reasons, which could also be pleasurable. Shrines like those at Holywell, Glastonbury, Durham, Walsingham, Canterbury, St Albans, Bacton and Westminster became centres for visitors in the Middle Ages. The links between religion and leisure were strengthened and some places of resort by the pilgrims became commercialised.[1] Although some of the activities described have similarities with later practices and are relevant to this study and suggest continuity and development into later tourism related ones, the cultural meanings attached to these activities would also have changed over time. For instance, artisans on the tramping circuit might well have found it an interesting or even enjoyable experience and carried with them a type of "cheque book" with vouchers to exchange for lodgings and money en route but they would not have thought of themselves as tourists.

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[1] D J Hall, English Medieval Pilgrimages, London, 1966, Chapter 1, quoted by G C Martin, "Working-class Holidays Down to 1947", MA Thesis, University of Leicester, 1968, p6

This thesis concentrates on the developmental period of working-class tourism and holidays covering the century from around 1850 to the 1950s, prior to the mature phase of the tourism industry. It would be erroneous to believe however, that before the 1850s workers did not travel or enjoy leisure. Pre-industrial leisure or "festival culture", was closely linked to the agrarian and religious calendars. This and the transformation to urban working-class leisure forms have been documented extensively by social historians.[2] There is no need to reiterate their findings and so the changes in use of leisure from rural to industrial society will not be dealt with here, except in so far as it concerns the origins of the holiday industry. What is significant to this study is the extent of the change in expectations about the use of holiday time.

Whilst there have always been people who travelled, the significant feature of modern tourism, imbuing it with more meaning than simply travelling and staying away from home, is that it is undertaken for pleasure. Even as recently as the late nineteenth century, most poor people who travelled were doing so out of necessity. They moved about the country in search of work or even left their own

[2] Notably by E P Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class, 1963; Peter Bailey, Leisure and Class in Victorian England. Rational Recreation and the contest for control, 1830-1885, London,1978; A P Donajgrodzki (ed), Social Control in Nineteenth Century Britain, London, 1977 and James Walvin, Leisure and Society 1830-1950, 1978; Peter Burke, The Invention of Leisure in Early Modern Europe, Past and Present, No 146, pp136 -150, 1995

country altogether by emigration. In England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, economic change caused many economically dislocated people to move from the countryside into the growing towns and cities. From the middle of the nineteenth century, not just in Britain but all over Europe, the amount of people leaving their own country and emigrating overseas increased. Before 1845, only in one year had more than 100,000 migrated to the United States. Between 1846 and 1859 an annual average of more than a quarter of a million left Europe followed in the next five years by an annual average of almost 350,000 people. America gained 428,000 immigrants in 1854 alone.[3] The bulk of these migrants were from Western Europe. Some artisans would migrate to earn money and then return to their homeland after a few years. A considerable proportion, between 30 and 40 per cent, returned home usually because they failed to settle down in the United States. Many craft union leaders had worked for a spell in America or elsewhere overseas and then returned to their homeland.[4] Irish migrant workers would have been familiar to British town dwellers. Witnessing migration and emigration meant that the idea of travel, even over long distances, was not an unfamiliar concept to many people. The difference between this and tourist travel was motivation. Migration and emigration was usually because of compulsion whereas tourism is usually undertaken by choice and for pleasure.

The development of the idea of travel as a means of

[3] Eric Hobsbawm, The Age of Capital, London, 1962, 1995 edition, p194

[4] Ibid, p201

enjoyment for large numbers of ordinary people was closely linked to industrial and economic development. Prerequisites for this included the creation of a transport infrastructure, workers obtaining a sufficient disposable income to meet the cost of a trip combined with a stay away from home and also having blocks of free time within which tourist activities can take place. Evidently early tourism closely succeeded the growth of the railway system and industrial expansion. In a textbook aimed at students of tourism, Burkart and Medlik distinguished three principal epochs of tourism.[5] The first was the period up to the early days of the railway age, this was before about 1840 in Britain and a little later elsewhere. The second period they identified covered the railway age itself. The third one was identified with the years between the two world wars, that witnessed the development of the private motor car and of bus and coach travel. It also included the period after the Second World War, when civil aviation came to share with the motor car the principal transport role in tourism.[6] The third epoch defined by Burkart and Medlik is inclusive of two distinct eras of tourism; the inter-war years and the period immediately after World War Two when the growth in the use of private cars, motor cycles and motor coaches, together with continued improvements on the railways, made the seaside accessible to greater numbers. While the demand increased during the inter-war years, it became accepted that working people had a right to expect a break from the

[5] A J Burkart and S Medlik, Tourism - Past, Present and Future, second edition, London, 1981, p3

[6] Ibid

routine of work. It was during these years culminating in the Amulree Report of the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay and the ensuing legislation, that paid holidays became campaigned for seriously within the working-class movement. The years from the 1950s onwards represent a completely different epoch not a continuation of the pre-war situation. A new age of mass tourism facilitated by almost universal holidays with pay began in the 1950s, for those in full-time work, for two weeks in increasing numbers of cases and even longer by the 1970s. This era saw the peak and gradual decline of the British seaside holiday in boarding house or holiday camp, the rise in demand for more independent and cheaper self-catering holidays in the UK as well as the phenomenal rise of the relatively cheap package holiday to sunspots abroad, linked to the growth of a highly commercialised consumer market. Events during the first of Burkart and Medlik's epochs and part of the second are under discussion in this chapter, the remainder will be investigated throughout the rest of the work.

The working class and its organisations have been instrumental in the creation and facilitation of the holiday industry, both as innovators in the provision of travel and accommodation and in the struggle for increased leisure time and the financial means with which to enjoy it. The taking of a holiday away from home is by no means universal. It is very difficult for those on low incomes or state benefits to be able to afford a holiday even though this is regarded as an essential by many. For this reason the inability to take a holiday away from home has come to be an indicator of relative poverty and charities

still exist to provide holidays for children from poor homes reliant on state benefits.[7]

2.2 On the Tramp - The Travelling Artisan

When discussing travel in the period before 1850 it should not be assumed that working people never did it for pleasure, despite ostensibly economic reasons for making journeys. The craft organisations of skilled artisans paid out of work members an allowance as they travelled the country on foot, in search of work. This aspect has been researched and documented by both R A Leeson[8] and Eric Hobsbawm[9] who investigated this feature of craft organisation. Eric Hobsbawm described tramping in his paper "The Travelling Artisan":

> The man who wished to leave town to look for work elsewhere, received a "blank" or "clearance" or "document", showing him to be a member in good standing of the society. This he presented to the local secretary or relieving officer in the "lodge house" or "club house" or "house of call" of the strange town - generally a pub - receiving in return supper, lodging, perhaps beer, and a tramp allowance. If there was work he took it; the call book (if there was one) was of course kept at the house of call, an unofficial labour

[7] An extant example is the Leicester Boys' and Girls' Holiday Home at Mablethorpe.

[8] R A Leeson, Travelling Brothers, London, 1979

[9] E J Hobsbawm, The Tramping Artisan, Labouring Men, London, 1964

exchange.[10]

This system, though outwardly a means of support for the unemployed and a way of regulating the supply of skilled labour, must also have encouraged in some the desire to travel for its own sake.[11] As a means of assisting the unemployed journeyman it would have been less efficient than paying relief to a man to stay at home. It was not a system suited to the needs of a married man with a family who would be forced to abandon them to the rates if he used this form of relief. Yet the tramping system persisted, in the case of stonemasons until the First World War. During the time of the repressive Combination Acts tramping was also a means of developing links between workers in one town with another, passing on information relating to rates of pay, disputes and working conditions as well as dispersing a pool of potential scab labour in times of conflict. The circulation of tradesmen around the country can be seen to have forged an embryonic national trade union structure, which proved vital in the transition from craft society to trade unions. By 1800 the system was highly developed, although its origins were much older, being in existence among Devon wool-combers as early as 1700.[12]

The practices of trade societies were also important to public houses, where workers of a particular trade might socialise. In a pub where a room was used for union meetings there might also have been a kind of "job centre"

[10] E J Hobsbawm, The Tramping Artisan, Labouring Men, op cit, 1964, p34

[11] Hobsbawm, op cit, p 34

where travelling artisans could find out about work available locally and cash in his cheque. Those on the tramp would have made for a pub bearing the name of his trade, such as the Bricklayers or Masons Arms for example.[13]

The adaptation of tramping to the needs of single men and the emphasis on travel suggests that the earlier craft organisations fostered touring the country for other than purely economic reasons. Travel could have been encouraged because of its educational value for young men just out of their apprenticeship. It enabled them to experience working life in a variety of contexts in order to expand their skills as all-round craftsmen. In the clothing industry, at one time a man was scarcely considered a good tailor unless he had done his turn on the road.[14] This would place British tramping in a position related to the continental Wanderpflicht, compagnonage or tour de France, part of the education of a craftsmen undertaken after coming out of his "time" or apprenticeship and before setting up as an independent craftsman or settling down with a wife and family. It was a sort of "artisan's Grand Tour", as Eric Hobsbawm described it.[15] That some men travelled because they chose to rather than were compelled to by unemployment or industrial conflict is proposed in the book "Travelling Brothers", written by R A Leeson, who found evidence that many tramps took to the road at times of full employment

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[12] Hobsbawm, The Tramping Artisan, op cit, p35

[13] Chris Pyrah, Inns and Taverns of Leicester, Leicester, 1984

[14] R A Leeson, op cit, p215

[15] Hobsbawm, op cit, p47

in their home town. The only reason for going on the tramp would have been personal choice, travelling for the pleasure of doing so or to broaden experience.[16] By the early nineteenth century tramping was widely practised in most trades. The Select Committee on Artisans and Machinery, looking into the Combination Acts, in 1824 found networks of houses of call and arrangements between Dublin based and English crafts.[17] Hatters, smiths, carpenters, boot and shoe-makers, metal-workers, bakers, tailors, plumbers, painters, glaziers, bookbinders and others had houses of call in London.[18] The printing trades, at the proposal of the Liverpool Society, introduced a General Reimbursement Fund in 1842, to equalise the amount paid out in different localities and to distribute the burdens more equally among members around the country. The provinces were spending far more in relieving men with London cards than London was in relieving theirs. London had to bear its share of the expense by paying two pence while northern societies now contributed only a penny to the fund.[19] Because of its practice among a wide variety of trades, with tramping circuits of over a thousand miles in some cases,[20] the custom must have been widely accepted and familiar not just to all skilled workers but to the communities of workers around them. For this reason the concept of tourism, although not the word itself, would have been

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[16] R A Leeson, op cit, p214

[17] Select Committee on Artisans and Machinery, 1824, pp295-296

[18] Hobsbawm, The Tramping Artisan, p36

[19] A E Musson, The Typographical Association, London, 1954, pp53-54

[20] The calico printers' circuit was between 1,000 and 1,400 miles and for compositors it could be 2,800 miles in distance, (Hobsbawm, p36)

familiar to most people, even though it was formed within a different cultural context.

The system of tramping may have had another important influence on one aspect of the tourism industry's later development. This was through the use of a cheque system by those on the tramp. On setting out the traveller would be given a cheque book valid for a certain number of days[21] and would cash the relief cheques at each branch or house of call visited for hospitality and an allowance. This was to guard against abuses of the system by those not entitled to benefit. The fact that craft societies felt that the system was being brought into disrepute by lazy people who were travelling to escape work rather than to find it, also suggests that at least some of those on the road were doing so for their own satisfaction and pleasure.[22]

Further innovation was introduced when John Cook, the son of Thomas Cook, developed the hotel coupon for use by tourists who had prepaid their accommodation costs.[23] Cook had copied the idea from the unsuccessful scheme in 1865, of a rival, Henry Gaze.[24] From 1868, Cook's sold coupons for eight shillings which entitled tourists to bed, two meals, lights (candle or lamp fuel) and attendance (service by a member of staff) at participating hotels. Tourists benefited from the assurance that they

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[21] Among masons it was valid for 98 days, according to Hobsbawm (p35).

[22] R A Leeson, op cit, p218

[23] Piers Brendon, Thomas Cook - 150 Years of Popular Tourism, London, 1996, p114

[24] Piers Brendon, op cit, p115

would not be overcharged or have problems carrying and exchanging currency. By 1872, 120,000 sets of coupons had been sold with a network of 150 continental hotels joining the scheme. In 1871 the American Express Company introduced travellers' cheques, known then as "circular notes", in the United States which were to replace letters of credit and the need for travellers to carry large amounts of currency. Soon, from 1872, travellers' cheques were issued in Britain, again by Thomas Cook and Son. Those on the tramp were already using their own kind of hotel coupons and travellers' cheques; their blanks or cheques, which they cashed in at the houses of call in the network. As formal reference is made in the rules for Operative Stonemasons from 1871 and in 1873 in the Operative Bakers' rules,[25] it is unlikely that the firm of Thomas Cook would not have been aware of their use before instigating its own system of coupons. Because of the numbers of migrants to America from among the artisan community it is likely that the system would have been known also to the American Express Company. Although no direct evidence links these schemes with the cheques of the tramping systems, the similarities are remarkable and it seems more than coincidental that the two systems could flourish contemporarily with each other without one being the inspiration for the other.

2.3 Excursion Pioneers

Whilst this thesis is concerned with ways in which the working class was able to facilitate holidays involving a

[25] Hobsbawm, The Tramping Artisan, p35

stay away from home from 1850 onwards through self-empowerment, it must be recognised that since the very beginning of the railway age in the 1830s, organisations catering for the needs of at least some sections of the working class had organised excursions primarily for leisure purposes. Examples of these, discussed in the following paragraphs, were the Mechanics' Institutes and Friendly Societies. These early excursions usually had some aspect of improvement to them such as a visit to an exhibition or even some moral edification such as tee-totalism. Despite the justifications for these excursions, putting them firmly in the field of rational recreation, the main motivation of trippers was the hope of enjoyment. The earliest excursions took place within a ceremonial atmosphere, accompanied by brass bands, jollity and feasting.[26] A welcoming party and passengers on the trip from Nottingham to an exhibition organised by the Mechanics' Institute in Leicester formed a procession four a-breast. The parade from the station to the exhibition venue was greeted by the Duke of Rutland's band playing "God Save the Queen". The band then provided further musical entertainment.[27] Even Thomas Cook's first temperance excursion was not a solemn occasion, the festive event in Loughborough being open to all, even drinkers of alcohol.

> We carried music and music met us at the Loughborough station. The people crowded the streets, filled

[26] Susan Barton, The Mechanics Institutes: Pioneers of Leisure and Excursion Travel, The Leicestershire and Rutland Archaeological Society Transactions, Volume LXVII, pp 47 -58

[27] Nottingham and Newarke Mercury, 24 July, 1840

windows, covered the housetops and cheered all along the line.[28]

Londoners had been able to travel to Margate by sailing hoy from the middle of the eighteenth century, at a fare of two shillings in 1757. The number of passenger hoys working on this route rose from four in 1763 to eleven by 1801.[29] Although there had been some excursions by steam boat, notably from London to Gravesend which was a popular trippers' resort before the railways opened up towns further afield,[30] and even by horse and cart before the coming of the railway, it was the railway excursion that launched the era of cheap holiday travel for the masses.[31] The first ever steam-powered rail excursion took place, but at normal fares, on the Liverpool and Manchester Railway on 16 September 1830, only one day after the line's opening. Even earlier than this, there had been excursions by horse-drawn train on the Swansea to Mumbles line of the Oystermouth Railway. The first rail excursion at reduced fares took place in 1839 on the Whitby and Pickering Railway, using horse-drawn trains for transport to the Grosmont Church Bazaar.[32]

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[28] Thomas Cook, quoted by Christopher Hibbert, The English, London, 1987, p683

[29] G C Martin, Working-class Holidays Down to 1947, MA Thesis, University of Leicester, 1968, p6

[30] John K Walton, The English Seaside Resort - A Social History 1750-1914, Leicester University Press, 1983, p26

[31] J A R Pimlott, The Englishman's Holiday, 1947, 1976 edition, Hassocks, Sussex, p77-78

[32] R Marchant, Early Excursion Trains, Railway Magazine, Volume 100, No 638, June 1954, pp426-429, p426

It was the work of the Mechanics' Institutes, though, which pioneered the way for the development of cheap, popular excursions utilising the power of steam-driven locomotives to convey large crowds of people including many members of the working class. The first of these excursions recorded took place in 1839 when York Mechanics' Institute members visited by train the Leeds Public Exhibition of the Works of Art, Science, Natural History and Manufacturing Skill which was organised by the Leeds Mechanics' Institute in collaboration with the Literary and Philosophical Society.[33] Following this example, another early Mechanics' excursion at reduced fares took place on 13 May 1840, involving the Newcastle and Carlisle Railway.[34] The year of 1840 saw the major launch of popular rail excursion travel. There was a spate of exhibitions during the summer of that year. The Leicester and Nottingham Mechanics' Institutes followed the example of their northern sister organisations when they arranged excursions between the two towns to visit each other's exhibitions. This particular reciprocal trip is known to have inspired Thomas Cook whose more famous excursion from Leicester to Loughborough took place a year later. Cook acknowledged this fact in his account of the arrangements for his excursion:

> I believe that the Midland Railway from Derby to Rugby via Leicester was opened in 1840... the reports in the papers of the opening of the new line created astonishment in Leicestershire and I had

[33] R J Morris, Leeds and the Crystal Palace, Victorian Studies, 13, 1970, pp283-300

> read of an interchange of visits between the Leicester and Nottingham mechanics institutes... About midway between Harborough and Leicester... a thought flashed through my brain - what a glorious thing it would be if the newly developed powers of railways and locomotives could be made subservient to the promotion of temperance![35]

This admission contradicts the official biographer of Cook, W Fraser Rae, who stated that Cook "is none the less an originator, because he never heard of anyone doing what he had accomplished" and "nothing more can be proved in opposition to his claim" to have been the originator of excursion travel "than the probable fact of the idea which flashed upon him in his lonely walk... having passed through other minds either beforehand or contemporaneously".[36] Fraser Rae's enthusiastic claims can perhaps be explained as his book was published by Thomas Cook and Son to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the firm. Fraser Rae is also mistaken in his assertion that the mechanics' excursions were not publicly advertised and open only to their own members, crediting Cook with running the first advertised excursion open to the general public. The Leicester Chronicle in July 1840 carried an advertisement from the Leicester Mechanics Institute addressed to the "Ladies and Gentlemen" who were not members "intending to join the party" for the excursion to Nottingham.[37] The

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[34] Marchant, op cit, p426

[35] J Pudney, The Thomas Cook Story, London, 1953, p53

[36] William Fraser Rae, The Business of Travel: a Fifty Years' Record of Progress, London, 1891, p23

[37] Leicester Chronicle, 25 July 1840

number who travelled, approximately 400 people, with a further 2,400 on a second trip later that summer, far outnumbered the membership of the Institute which totalled between 600 and 700 at that time.[38] For the first of these trips "Not less than 420 took their places, 100 in the first class, 150 in the second and 150 in the third class".[39] From these estimates, although they don't add up, it can be seen that the number of people spending six shillings for first class tickets and four shillings and sixpence on second class seats outnumbered those paying the third class fare of two shillings by a ratio of five to three. This is indicative of the experience of many Mechanics Institutes that had problems attracting genuine mechanics or working men.[40] As the combined quantity of travellers on both trips outnumbered the total membership of the institutes it is not possible to tell which category of passenger contained most actual members. A journalist travelling with the party described the exhilaration of the fastest movement he had ever yet experienced:

> We need scarcely say, how they bowled along; what a "hith" was made on passing a bridge or another train of carriages, how objects on either side seem to flit from view; horses, cows, calves, colts, and sheep, scampered off in surprise; and cottagers, labourers, and villagers gazed and wondered at the sight… The grove

[38] A Temple Paterson, Radical Leicester: A History of Leicester, 1780-1850, Leicester, 1954, p238

[39] Nottingham and Newarke Mercury, 24 July, 1840

[40] Toshio Kusamitsu, Great Exhibitions Before 1851, History Workshop Journal, Number 9, 1980, pp70-89

of Clifton, the bridge over the Trent, the Red-hill tunnel with its darkened shadows, all engaged attention and furnished topics of conversation.[41]

The second excursion from Nottingham to Leicester a month later was even more popular. The train of sixteen carriages and two engines was the longest ever seen up until that time on the Midland Counties line and it drew considerable attention, with villagers stopping to stare as it passed through the countryside.[42] After adding more carriages and engines to accommodate the growing numbers of excursionists as the train progressed towards Leicester, the final total was seventy carriages powered by four engines. The party was hours late in arriving and the crowds assembled at Leicester station grew extremely anxious. A search party was despatched on an engine from Leicester to locate the awaited train. Eventually the party arrived safely but extremely late. For the journey home it was wisely decided to despatch two separate trains to accommodate the massive number of excursionists.[43]

Both Leicester and Nottingham Mechanics' Institutes were motivated by the desire to purchase or build premises in which to house their resources and activities under one roof. With this objective in mind, both groups wished to raise funds towards this expensive venture. Another unwritten objective could have been the desire to promote the cause of political reform. At this time the Chartist movement was a growing force among working people, few of

[41] Nottingham Review, 24 July, 1840

[42] Ibid

whom, other than those who were freemen by birth or apprenticeship had the right to vote at this time.[44] An article in the Leicester Journal that same summer,[45] announced a plan to reform Chartist organisations as the National Charter Association of Great Britain in order to reconstitute their scattered forces and bring pressure to bear on the government to introduce democratic reforms. The vice-president of Leicester Mechanics, John Biggs, was an advocate of political reform, by moral force rather than by violent struggle. Within this context, the exhibition and the excursions would have presented an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the intelligence, capabilities and good behaviour of respectable working men and so dispel some of the arguments against their enfranchisement.[46]

The mechanics' exhibitions formed the ideal prototype for the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations a decade later, which inspired so many to travel and to devise new ways of meeting the needs of very large numbers of working-class travellers.[47]

Railway transport was essential for the organisation of

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[43] Leicester Journal, 28 August, 1840

[44] J Simmons, Leicester, Past and Present: Ancient Borough to 1860, 1, London, 1974, p 148

[45] Leicester Journal, 28 August 1840

[46] Susan Barton, The Mechanics Institutes: Pioneers of Leisure and Excursion Travel, The Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society: Transactions, Volume LXVII, 1993, pp47-58, p49

[47] Toshio Kusamitsu, Industrial Design and Exhibitions, PhD Thesis, University of Sheffield, 1982; Toshio Kusamitsu, Great Exhibitions Before 1851, History Workshop, 9, 1980, pp70-89

all these excursions, which would have been unable to take place only a few months earlier. A large number of people had been enabled to travel a comparatively long distance, quickly and cheaply. The Leicester Exhibition Gazette, a magazine to accompany the town's mechanics' exhibition in 1840, acknowledged the major contribution of the railway to transportation and its potential as a liberator of humankind from the barriers imposed by distance:

> A more signal instance of the triumph of science over matter, and the power of mind to overcome obstacles which oppose its ends, has not been witnessed in our town. This idea is trite enough and a similar one may be found better expressed in almost every newspaper we cast our eyes on, but it is worthwhile to illustrate statistically the advantages accruing to every department of society by this annihilation of space and economy of time. Had a visit like this been contemplated a year since, how could it have been carried into effect? At the most moderate computation, thirty coaches must have been engaged, two hundred horses employed, six hours consumed in the journey to and fro, far greater fatigue and risk, in the aggregate, incurred, and the time afforded for the objects of the journey shortened by four hours. Almost any one of these obstacles is singly sufficient to have deterred anyone from the proposal of such a visit as we have the pleasure to record, while their amount would have rendered

the bare contemplation preposterous.[48]

Other methods of transport could not match the railway trains for speed, capacity and eventually the range of destinations. Right from the start, working-class trippers took advantage of the railway excursion. After the pioneering trips of the mechanics' institutes, friendly societies soon jumped on the band (or passenger) wagon. The Oddfellows and Foresters were both organising trips from Leeds to the north east coast and to Scarborough in 1840.[49] A survey by Douglas Reid of excursions leaving Birmingham, showed that six years later in 1846, nearly half of them were organised by those characteristically working-class institutions, friendly societies.[50] The societies that promoted the Birmingham excursions originated among and attracted better-paid and more skilled working-men. These trips were all organised by "affiliated orders": the Manchester Unity; the Wolverhampton Loyal Order; the London Independent; the Druids; the Foresters; the Free Gardeners, organisations whose membership comprised, as Reid says, precisely the social stratum we would envisage as most capable of going on excursions. Most of the trips advertised were relatively inexpensive at prices for day trips ranging from six pence for a trip to Gloucester for a Henry Vincent rally, up to eight shillings for a visit to Chester for the races and some sightseeing, the average

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[48] Leicester Exhibition Gazette, 23 July 1840

[49] Walton, The English Seaside Resort, op cit, p28

[50] D Reid, The 'Iron Roads' and 'the Happiness of the Working Classes' - the early development of the railway excursion, The Journal of Transport History, Third Series, Vol 17, No 1, March 1996, pp57-73

price of the excursions being four shillings.

As well as trips for just a single day there were a number of more expensive ones lasting for several days, such as a week in London at a fare of 12 shillings or a few days in Liverpool for 10 shillings,[51] prices which were rather expensive if there were additional accommodation costs and loss of earnings to be taken into account. Although these trips were organised by friendly societies, it cannot be identified from Reid's figures what proportion of travellers were working class. Tickets could have been purchased by either working or lower middle-class people. However, what is most significant is that organisations with a substantial upper working-class membership were actually organising collective holidays to places of interest for several days as early as the mid-1840s. A trip to London organised by the Manchester Unity society even included the services of a guide. Most of the trips seem to include pleasurable pastimes such as boat trips rather than purely educational activities. Reid has not been able to determine whether or not arrangements had been made for accommodation for members travelling. The prices advertised might have been for non-members to fill empty seats and to raise funds. That was the arrangement in June 1857, when the Shropshire Provident Society hired a train to go to the Manchester Exhibition of Art Treasures. Tickets included the fare for the return journey and entrance to the exhibition at a combined cost of five shillings to non-members of the society but a cheaper rate of four shillings for members and their

[51] Reid, op cit, pp60-61

families,[52] an early inclusive or package tour. In a likewise manner, members of the Birmingham societies themselves may have been offered a cheaper fare or even a package including lodgings during the 1846 excursions. From the register of accommodation in London suitable for working men and artisans, compiled in 1850, we know that lodging houses were in existence catering for that share of the market.[53] Thomas Cook had attempted to compile such a register for Leicester in the early 1840s.[54] Prospective travellers might also have been offered savings schemes facilities to spread the cost. Not all the excursions analysed were run by friendly societies; some of them were organised by private promoters, presumably to make a profit although their prices were no higher than those of the societies.

What though is the significance of these initiatives that enabled working-class people to take part in tourist related leisure activities? Why weren't workers simply imitating middle-class travellers and tourists? Railway travel was after all equally available to the middle class, even more so when the amount that could be spent on leisure from disposable income is taken into account. Train travel and especially the excursion organised by workers' own organisations was particularly suited to fit working-class taste and culture. Group travel in a shared

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[52] Alan Delgado, The Annual Outing and Other Excursions, London, 1977, p131

[53] Circular of the Central London Registry, London, May 1851, Manchester Reference Library; other information on lodgings for working men was gathered from advertising bills issued in 1850 and 1851.

[54] Cook's Guide to Leicester, Leicester, 1843, pages unnumbered

railway carriage was never really appealing to the middle class whose more reserved, privatised culture meant that they shunned group or communal activities in favour of family ones. Railway carriages had to be adapted by division into small compartments to make them respectable enough for middle-class travellers, who shied away from sitting among strangers in an open carriage of the type where working-class excursionists crammed in to the cheaper seats. Middle-class trippers would have been very reluctant to subject themselves to literally rubbing shoulders with the mass of their fellow travellers. The collectivist culture of the workers and its strong sense of group identity was positively at home on an organised rail excursion. Overcrowded housing in working-class districts made this aspect of culture integral to daily existence.[55] The middle-class ideal was a separate family holiday rather than a mere "clubbing together" on a day or even a longer trip.[56] Whilst Reid recognises that there is no precise way of knowing the class composition of excursionists, non-working-class participants were very likely from the ranks of master tradesmen or small scale manufacturers who had not yet acquired either middle-class respectability or income and the social distancing that went with it. They would have felt no affront to their status by travelling on an excursion, albeit not always in the third class carriages with their employees. Rail travel itself was socially segregated from the start with separate waiting rooms and sections of the train for different classes of passenger. On any rail excursion the

[55] Melanie Tebbutt, Women's Talk? A social History of "Gossip" in Working-class Neighbourhoods, 1880-1960, Aldershot, 1995, p183

majority of accommodation, unless the train was reserved specifically for first class passengers,[57] was in the third class carriages, so obviously the greatest number of trippers was expected to be from lower or moderate income groups.

The garrulousness of workers meant that sharing accommodation on the train was not beneath their dignity. In the dialect account of a Bolton weaver and his wife's visit to the Paris Exhibition of 1867, the couple engaged in conversation by their fellow train passengers on the initial stage of the journey to London. They talk about people's family business, make personal remarks, quarrel and exchange insults with strangers and encounter drunks in a way that would surely have been offensive to more genteel middle-class passengers. Having been startled by a small explosion caused by putting her foot on a box of matches on the floor, Sarah Shuttleworth, the weaver's wife enters into banter with a male passenger.

> "Sink their apishness, aw wish thoose ut had done this trick mut ha th'toothwertch till they'd etten a box o'lucifers t'their supper", she exclaimed. "They'll not ha bin laid on th'carriage bothom o purpose, woman," said a chap wi short sondy yure... "Heaw does theaw know, Mester Pepperpod?" retorted Sayroh in her best snappish style. "Well, in cooarse", wur th' onswer, "aw know nowt abeawt it for a sartinty, but aw should think o my heert ut nobuddy would ever do a

[56] Reid, op cit, p63

[57] Delgado, op cit, p131

trick o that sort". "If theaw knows nowt abeawt it", said Sayroh, "say nowt abwawt it, un show thy wisdom".[58]

An elderly widow joins them in the carriage and proceeds to relate intimate details of her family life.

Eh, dear, aye; it's a wearifo thing, isn't it, when an owd woman leighses hur husband - speshully if he's bin a good un, un moine wur welly a noane-sitch - un hoo has to goo un live wi one uv her childer? Eh, dear, aye; aw live wi eawr Sally - as noice a wench as ever carried a shoof full of booans afore hoo geet wed; un that change in hur loife gien hur temper a twist, un changed that too. Eh, dear, aye. Heigho! But, then, yoa seen, Missis, hoo geet an ornary husband; hoo'd no mooaar sense than wed a coaler ust fond uv his drink. Eh, dear, aye; un he keeps pidjuns, un goes eawt uv a Sunday mornin o whistlin um off th' heaawse tops, un catchin straggs; un then he goes to an owd durty jerry-shop wheere they sell'n thripenny ale; un hobbles whoam to his dinner drunk, un raises a regilur hallibash if oather me or Sally looks cruckt".[59]

The widow then hurls an insult at a man who speaks to her:

"Theaw looks clivver; theaw's made thy own clugs, aaw'll bet tuppence, un fashunt um after th' make o thy

[58] J T Staton, Th' Visit to th' Greight Parris Eggsibishun of Bobby Shuttle un his woife Sayroh, Manchester, 1867, p46

[59] Ibid, p48

yed. Theaw'rt thick at booath eends".[60]

During the same journey a drunken man sat opposite Sarah, and pulling a flask from his side pocket he offered it to her. "In this, fair Amazon," he said:

> There is liquor fit for the gods; it is terrestrial ambrosia; the elixir of life. Pray, take the flask from mine hand and moisten it with those chaste lips. In plain English, take a swig, old cockolorum. 'Tis brandy - brandy![61]

Sarah was reluctant to accept this invitation but the man forced the flask to her lips and she took a drink, pretending to like it. Then, at his request, she passed it round the compartment to another seven passengers who all said that it was liquor of the finest quality. These incidents did not take place on an excursion trip but in a third class carriage of a timetabled train. No pretence of edification or self-improvement was demonstrated on this journey.

Middle-class travellers were able to segregate themselves to a certain extent by purchasing tickets for the more expensive, first class carriages. Railway carriages formed a physical space where travelling companions were not chosen and the close proximately of fellow passengers made interaction hard to avoid. Carriages were not segregated by gender and so female travellers could find themselves alone

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[60] Ibid, p49

[61] Ibid, p55

with strange men, a social experience not approved of in normal middle-class etiquette. As a newly emerging public activity, travel offered a cultural space for interactions that reflected negotiations in power relations between gender and class. The enhanced social status of middle-class passengers would have offered some protection from unwelcome advances from the "lower orders". Writing about travel in nineteenth century America, Patricia Cline Cohen suggests that the worrisome possibilities inherent in travel within the public space of railway carriages produced in response an etiquette of travel that emphasised rigid codes of conduct, rules of politeness and sex segregation where feasible.[62] This took place in a very public arena where normal codes of behaviour were tested. Using the behaviour of modern travellers as evidence, the development of an evolving set of manners also happened in Britain. Although some passengers do engage in conversation with each other, unwritten rules about physical proximity are observed, for instance people do not sit next to strangers if empty seats are available. It is quite normal for travellers to ignore each other, keeping themselves to themselves as if protected by an unseen bubble.

Returning to the theme of excursions, not all of those patronised by members of the working class were edifying or educational by twentieth century standards but sometimes did reflect the demand created by its cultural taste for the macabre. Before the abolition of public hanging in Britain, in 1868, excursions were run to executions. In 1840 the

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[62] Patricia Cline Cohen, Women at Large: Travel in Antebellum America, History Today, Volume 44, Number 12, December 1994, pp44-50

murderer of Mr Norway of Wadebridge was hanged at Bodmin. Three special trains were put on by the Bodmin and Wadebridge Railway so that Wadebridge people could watch the hanging. Almost half the Wadebridge population, 1100 people joined the trip and were able to watch the spectacle from the comfort of the rail carriage as the rail depot was adjacent to the jail.[63] In 1849 J Gleeson Wilson, convicted of the murder of a woman, her two sons and a servant, was hanged at Kirkdale Gaol. A massive crowd of between 80,000 and 90,000 people went to Liverpool to view the execution, many of them arriving by excursion train.[64]

It should not be thought that the railway companies were initially motivated by benevolence in providing cheap travel facilities for ordinary people. Their primary trade was moving industrial goods and raw materials rather than a large volume of passenger traffic. Developments in passenger traffic were mainly concentrated on the middle-class market. Despite the growth in the numbers of excursions from 1839 onwards and the huge numbers who travelled to London for the Great Exhibition, it was not until 1872 that British railway companies earned fifty per cent of their total passenger receipts from third-class traffic. In fact, they had made little effort to develop the working-class market despite government compulsion to provide a minimum amount of cheaper third-class accommodation.[65]

A newspaper advertisement of 1855 demonstrates the

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[63] Delgado, op cit, p132

[64] Ibid

popularity of excursions and their effect on the imagination as the heading CHEAP EXCURSION is used as an eye-catcher over text which reads:

> J Levy begs to inform the inhabitants of Leicester and the surrounding neighbourhood, that the Cheapest Trip they can make is to his large and spacious premises.... where a splendid assortment of Ready Made Clothing is now awaiting their inspection.[66]

2.4 Edification, Education and Enjoyment - The Attractions of Exhibitions

Exhibitions were a popular excursion destination for workers as they were not just entertaining but could be patriotic and edifying, and at the same time educational and improving. From those of the mechanics' institutes, the Great Exhibition visited by millions in 1851, the follow up exhibition at the Crystal Palace in 1862 and even overseas trips to the Paris exhibitions in 1855 and 1867, right into the twentieth century for the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley in 1924, exhibitions have been a major attraction for excursionists. Continuity of theme at these World's Fairs celebrating industrial and colonial achievement was coupled with continual evolution in transport and visitor expectations.

In the early 1840s, the train ride itself would have been as much a novelty as the actual exhibitions. The 1851

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[65] Eric Hobsbawm, The Age of Capital, London, 1962, (1995 edition), p204

[66] Leicestershire Advertiser, 19 May 1855

exhibition was the motivation for a vast influx of excursionists to London from all over Britain and even from Europe and the rest of the world. This event truly popularised not just the excursion but, for those living too far away to make the return journey in a day, a stay away from home was also experienced. London's second Great Exhibition in 1862 provided further stimulus to working-class travellers, despite the American Civil War causing severe depression in the cotton industry with a detrimental knock on effect in many other areas of the economy. Railway companies managed their own excursions there. Thomas Cook accommodated the "humbler class of visitors" in a new block of tenements at 147a Fulham Road, a further instance of the needs and demands of working-class tourists stimulating the development of the tourism industry.[67]

By the 1860s excursions by rail were commonplace and workers were venturing further afield and even abroad. Some local committees set up to organise local contributions to the Great Exhibition have entries at the end of their minute books detailing money left in the funds being set aside for use by travellers to the Paris Exhibition. Thomas Cook organised travel there for workers' groups and factory outings took place.[68] Exhibitions were a source of stimulation not just for travel within the United Kingdom but for early excursions abroad too. Thomas Cook arranged Continental Tours combined with visits to the Paris

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[67] Piers Brendon, Thomas Cook - 150 Years of Popular Tourism, London, 1996, p275

[68] Bolton Local Committee Minute Book, 1850-51, Bolton Metropolitan Libraries, Arts and Archives, ref FZ 39/1; Piers Brendon, Thomas Cook - 150 Years of Popular Tourism, p73

Exhibition in 1855. By his own estimation these tours were neither large nor profitable because of lack of encouragement from the railway authorities of France and Belgium who would not allow him any concessions on ticket prices despite his having paid out nearly 1000 francs.[69] Cook didn't give quite his usual attention to detail on one of his Paris expeditions in 1861. Arranging for a party of workers to meet on the gardens of the Champs Elysées one day, he had forgotten about Louis Napoleon's martial law. As gatherings of people in public places were forbidden, the group was promptly dispersed by the police.[70] This group was in Paris on an expedition prompted by Joseph Paxton who was president of a Committee of Working Men. The excursion originated partly to counter a proposed visit by a military group, the Rifle Volunteers. The London Committee of Working Men wanted a comradely visit by workers, shaking hands with French workmen and to promote peace between the two nations. With Paxton's help, Cook was able to offer the lowest ever fares to Paris from London, only a pound third class return, which included a luggage allowance of twenty-eight pounds. Rooms were secured for two francs (1s 8d) a night and dinner for the same price. Heavy advertising attracted 1,673 people including women and children on the six day Whitsun tour. Most of the party was from the North of England, a group of 200 came from Titus Salt's textile works in Bradford, but probably not everyone was working class. Unfortunately despite the ultimate success of this

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[69] Thomas Cook, Twenty Years on the Rails - Reminiscences of Excursions and Tours in England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, the Channel Islands and the Continent, Leicester, 1860, p10

[70] Harold P Clunn, The Face of Paris, London, s.d. c1950, pp125-126; Piers Brendon, op cit, p74

International Excursion, Cook made a loss of £120 on the trip and was prevented from making good his losses on future French excursions by the railway companies who prevented him making more journeys on the same lines[71] because they wanted to develop this market themselves.

After the British Great Exhibition of 1851, the balance of the accounts of the Sunderland Local Committee, £18 1s 8d, is recorded as being carried forward to the Paris Exhibition fund. The same committee was active in 1855 when the account book goes on to list transactions relating to an exhibition it had organised locally in March of that year. There is a record of debits totalling £411 16s 11d carried forward out of which £194 15s 2d was paid out for the Paris Exhibition between 13 August and 28 November. Payments were made for the use of flags and for an ensign of a French flag. Some of these payments may have been to support exhibitors, for example £1 5s 0d is shown as having been paid to J D Handy for carving a lion. After the Paris Exhibition of 1855, £1 5s 5 1/2d remained which was paid in by cash to the Union Bank for the Paris Exhibition fund in June 1858.[72]

William Andrews, a ribbon weaver and designer of Coventry, was awarded a prize of eight pounds by the government to visit the 1855 exhibition in Paris.[73] He immediately

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[71] Piers Brendon, op cit, pp73-75

[72] Sunderland Exhibition Committee, accounts by Thomas Burn, treasurer, 1851-1858, Tyne and Wear Archives, ref 745/1

[73] William Andrews, The Unpublished Diary of William Andrews, Master and Artisan in Victorian England, London, 1969, pp21-22. Andrews lived in

began preparation, buying guidebooks to Paris and the continental railways as well as maps, and he obtained a passport. With only a week's notice of his trip, he left home on 12 July. On reaching Boulogne he lodged overnight there at the British Hotel. Williams stayed in Paris for a week, visiting the Exposition des Beaux Arts and the Exposition Industrielle on three consecutive days. The remaining time of his visit he acted as a conventional tourist seeing the attractions of the city.[74] In the course of his successful career, Williams visited Paris several times on business and later toured France, Switzerland and Germany in search of work when the Coventry ribbon trade was in distress.[75] As the Diary ends in 1866, we don't know if Williams also attended the next Paris Exhibition.

Paris again attracted working-class visitors in 1867 and in subsequent decades when exhibitions were held. The contemporary fictional adventures of Bobby Shuttleworth, a Bolton weaver and Sarah, his wife, described in Lancashire dialect, their trip and stay in Paris for the exhibition of 1867:

> Th' buildin itsel is a seet sitch as one doesn't meet wi' every day, even ith grandest o cities; un aw its surreawndins are quite on a paar w'it. Aw macks o trades are gooin on; aw macks o industries. Nuthin that th' moind con imagine in connecshun wi art,

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Coventry between 1835 and 1914 and became quite a successful businessman in the ribbon trade.

[74] William Andrews, op cit, p22

[75] Ibid, pp25-26

> science, un industry but is there represented, un in a style that before on sees it, th' moind couldn't ha picturt th' reality…. Then there's th' buildin itsel, quite a curiosity in its way. Eawr Sayroh's ideo wur that there wur no eend to it, un that to threed one's way through it wur as bad as maunderin throof that maze a Belle Vue Gerdins.[76]

A trip to the Paris Exhibition also figured prominently in the life of another Coventry ribbon-weaver, who was chosen to visit the exhibition and to report back to the Society of Arts. Joseph Gutteridge (1816-1895) describes his visit in his autobiography. "On reaching Paris we made our way to the lodgements in the Rue Rapp, temporary buildings put up for British workmen visiting the exhibition." Here he and his companions engaged an apartment for five francs a week situated opposite the exhibition to which they purchased weekly tickets. They ate at a nearby café where fortunately for the pair there was an English waitress. The group then went to the British Workmen's Hall where they were presented with an official catalogue and a French phrase book.

> For the first week they studied hard to obtain a knowledge of the machinery there used in the weaving trade, the mode of production and cost, the weavers' prices for making as compared with the prices paid in Coventry, taking copious notes to enable them to make

[76] J T Staton, op cit, pp84-85

their report.[77]

He visited not only the exhibition but most of the sights of Paris. After the exhibition the group toured the south of France, Switzerland and Germany at the request and expense of the Coventry Committee to gather more information about the ribbon trade, although promised subsistence payments never arrived.[78] From Gutteridge's account it is apparent that the organisers of the Paris Exhibition had taken just as much trouble to provide suitable and hospitable accommodation for working-class visitors, even those from overseas, as the British had done in 1851. Later, in 1870 Gutteridge was entrusted by his employer, Mr Stevens, with the job of demonstrating the art of weaving silk pictures (Stevengraphs) at the Bradford Exhibition.[79]

By the time of the British Empire Exhibition in 1924, celebrating the contribution made by the colonies to the Great War, the charabanc had superseded the train as the most usual means of excursion transport[80] using the network of roads, upgraded for motor vehicles. Another sign of changing modes of travel and the birth of a new era in transportation was a car park next to the exhibition site. This was not likely to have been used by many working-class visitors in 1924 but is none-the-less a portent of things to come in the years after the Second

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[77] Joseph Gutteridge, The Autobiography of Joseph Gutteridge, Master and Artisan in Victorian England, London, 1969, p3 and p185.

[78] Gutteridge, op cit, pp194-195

[79] Ibid, pp211-218

[80] Delgado, op cit, p127

World War. A concession to popular taste at the Empire Exhibition was the funfair, the kind of attraction normally associated with holidaymaking and revelry rather than a serious educational venture like an exhibition.

The entertainment aspect of supposedly educational events cannot be underestimated. Sensationalist publicity was used to advertise the early Mechanics' exhibitions and this conflict between education and entertainment continues to the present.[81]

After World War One, charabancs, early motor coaches which were usually open-topped, competed with rail transport for working-class excursion traffic. For most working-class people a day-out by "chara" was the only form of holiday affordable before the Holidays with Pay Act. The English author, Laurie Lee, in his autobiographical novel "Cider With Rosie" describes a charabanc trip to Weston-Super-Mare in the early 1920s:

> Mile after mile we went, under the racing sky, flying neckties and paper kites from the back, eyes screwed in the weeping wind. The elders, protected in front by the windscreen, chewed strips of bacon, or slept.

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[81] Late twentieth century heritage centres and museums attempt to resolve this by attempting to accurately present and interpret the past but they also need to attract as many visitors as possible and compete with alternative attractions. They are therefore forced to provide amusement rather than purely serious education so we end up with such incongruities as Easter Egg hunts on colliery sites. Very enjoyable for children but hardly raising awareness of the conditions endured by miners.

> Mother pointed out landmarks and lectured the sleepers on points of historical interest.[82]

The tourism textbooks credit Thomas Cook with the invention of both the excursion and the package holiday. This erroneous and misleading point of view assigns the role of passive consumers to large numbers of working people who travelled in the excursion trains and trips to the Great Exhibition and ignores the achievement of working-class organisations in the initiation of travel for the masses. This is not to belittle Cook's personal achievements as a radical campaigner, an energetic entrepreneur and promoter of travel who passed on to his son, John, the basis of a world wide travel business. Thomas Cook though made no claim to having invented either excursions or inclusive tours himself. In his memoirs he clearly states that when he had that flash of inspiration on the road from Market Harborough to Leicester in 1841, he had in mind the trips made between Leicester and Nottingham organised by the Mechanics' Institutes of the towns to each others' exhibitions.[83] This gave him the idea to run his own excursion from Leicester to Loughborough for a Temperance Rally. The Mechanics' trips were not the first excursions either, since the inception of the steam railways excursions had been organised. Even before steam trains there were horse drawn rail excursions and trips by boat. By the time the Great Exhibition was announced there was already a dozen years of excursion experience by steam train.

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[82] Laurie Lee, Cider With Rosie, Harmondsworth, 1962, p194

[83] J Pudney, The Thomas Cook Story, London, 1953, p53

2.5 Conclusion

Having taken an overview of the early days of working-class travel and tourism, setting the context of the period and situation from which the thesis develops, the remainder of the work will look in more detail at the active role played by workers and their organisations in the tourist phenomenon realised by the late twentieth century. Commencing with the Great Exhibition, concentration will now focus on the period from 1850 to 1950 and the beginning of the age of truly mass tourism.

Chapter 3

WORKERS AND THE GREAT EXHIBITION - The Origins of the Package Holiday Ethos

3.1 Introduction - The Package Holiday Ethos

In the last chapter we could have seen that, by the 1840s, working-class people had become accustomed to taking excursions by rail or even steam boat as a leisure time activity. These excursions to the coast or places and events of interest were usually of just a single day's duration, in some cases they involved a stay away from home for several days, such as those from Birmingham described in the previous chapter.[1] Whether or not these excursions combined with stays away from home were sold as an inclusive package or purchased separately and independently by travellers is subject to speculation. It is possible to identify clear evidence of arrangements for travel, accommodation and entertainment available as a package for a single price for visits to the Great Exhibition in 1851. This chapter will examine these arrangements for travel to the Exhibition in detail as a key development in mass tourism. This event provided a focus for national interest and a common destination and motivation for visitors. The distances and time involved in travel to London made staying away from home overnight or for several nights essential. The railway network made the journey possible, in a reasonable length of time, from all around Britain. The Exhibition took place between May and September 1851, providing a time constraint for those planning to visit and a defined

[1] Douglas Reid, The 'Iron Roads' and 'the Happiness of the Working Classes' - the early development of the railway excursion, The Journal of Transport History, Third Series, Vol 17, No 1, March 1996, pp 57-73

period within which savings and travel clubs had to operate. The social and political background of 1851 will also be explored as this had a considerable effect on working-class behaviour, especially that of those active in the labour movement.

Plans to hold a Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations in London were announced in 1850. In this year, the British urban population outnumbered the rural for the first time. The preparations and arrangements made to enable large numbers of working people to travel to London, to stay there for a few days and visit the Exhibition and other places of interest were of vital importance to the history of tourism. Trips to the Exhibition showed many of the features of the modern inclusive tour, better known as the package holiday. The origins of the package holiday ethos seem to lie in these trips and excursions, although the term "holiday" was not used to describe these visits. The culture of the commodity, objects for their own sake, and consumerism also seem to originate from this event.[2] For this reason what might seem fairly trivial, interesting but of no lasting consequence, will be described and analysed in detail and at length.

Before going on to discuss the workers' activities around arrangements for the Exhibition, it is necessary to describe what is meant by the term "package holiday ethos".

In order to discover and work with an accepted definition, some of the main text books used by students studying travel and tourism on vocational courses were

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[2] Thomas Richards, The Commodity Culture of Victorian England - Advertising and Spectacle, 1851-1914, Stanford University Press, 1990, pp 1-72

consulted.[3] Essentially an inclusive (or package) tour is a package of transport and accommodation and perhaps some other recreational services which is sold as a single holiday for a single all inclusive price. That price is usually substantially lower than could be obtained by conventional methods of booking transport and accommodation separately with individual tariffs. Normally the tourist travels in a group with other tourists. Package tour seems to be a term that describes this type of holiday accurately. The consumer has the convenience of buying a single ticket. Through bulk-purchase of the components of the holiday, the tour operator is able to secure a lower price than that available to individual travellers. It is a total tourism product which is on offer, dependent on inter-related factors relating to supply and demand. High demand means transport providers can rely on a high load factor, allowing costs per passenger to be reduced. Advance, bulk buying of seats allows the carrier to be assured of a full load and so empty seats do not have to be paid for. Tourism text books indicate the 1950s and 1960s for the origination of this kind of travel for large numbers of working-class people.[4]

Holloway and Plant talk about the need for marketers of the tourist product to be aware of the three fears to be overcome before mass tourism can take place: fear of flying; fear of foreign food; fear of foreigners.[5] Although in this context "foreign" refers to people and places outside the United Kingdom, at the time of the

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[3] A J Burkart and S Medlik, Tourism - Past, Present and Future, London, Second edition, 1981; J C Holloway and R V Plant, Marketing for Tourism, London, 1988; J Christopher Holloway, The Business of Tourism, Third edition, London, 1989

[4] Holloway, op cit, p41

[5] Holloway and Plant, op cit, pp6-8

Exhibition London was a "foreign" place beyond the experience of many provincial travellers, used only to their own local customs. There are a number of features which form the components of package holidays: advance booking; group travel; bulk purchase of transport; block booking of accommodation; advertising and brochures; the services of a tour guide or representative; entertainment offered; possible excursion opportunities; security for travellers.[6]

From the data available, it emerges that all of these features were present in the services and facilities provided by the Exhibition travel clubs. The need to overcome the three fears has been an underpinning factor in all trips organised for or by the working-class. Fear of flying, in the days before popular aviation was obviously not a problem but fears of other travel technology would be relevant. In the days when rail travel was a novelty, the effect of moving at speed on the human body was a cause for concern. Some people thought that it would be impossible to breathe if moving at high speed. For instance, in 1835 thirty miles an hour was considered a very high speed. As Charles Young, a passenger in that very early period of rail travel wrote in a letter:

> A few minutes after we started, not very fast at first, but in less than five minutes, off we went like a shot from a gun. No sooner did we come to a field than it was a mile behind us, but this was nothing in comparison with meeting a long train of carriages from Liverpool. I was never so frightened in my life as at this moment; I shrank completely back, horrified, in my seat; I do not think the

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[6] Ibid, p112

> train was more than two seconds in passing, yet it was as long as Holywell Hill. We were going at a full thirty-four miles an hour.[7]

When Queen Victoria arrived at Paddington Station from Slough in 1842, after her first experience of rail travel, the seventeen mile journey had taken twenty-three minutes at a speed of forty-four miles an hour. Prince Albert thought this rather dangerous. "Not so fast next time, Mr conductor, if you please", he is alleged to have requested.[8] By the time of the Exhibition, trains were capable of reaching sixty miles an hour and accident rates were very high, mostly reported as being because of passengers' lack of fast travel experience. They jumped off moving trains pursuing blown off hats, tried to board carriages when in motion, sat on top of carriages and were dashed against bridges and tunnels or fell out of trucks when drunk or jostling in arguments.[9] In 1851, anxieties about rail travel were justified and no less real than modern fears of flying. Even going through tunnels filled with smoke and steam could be a very frightening experience. Charles Young's letter goes on to describe this.

> You go through a dark, black, ugly, vile abominable tunnel three hundred yards long, which has all the horrors of banishment from life - such a hole as I never wish to go through again.[10]

Rail travel was not a dreadful experience for everyone. There were people who found even long journeys relaxing.

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[7] Charles Young, 6 August 1835, quoted by Christopher Hibbert, The English - A Social History 1066-1945, London, 1987, p650

[8] Ibid

[9] Hibbert, op cit, p651

[10] Hibbert, op cit, p651

A letter from Alexander Frew, tells how he travelled from Glasgow to the Exhibition, and stayed at Mrs McDonald's at 19 Addle Street. Perhaps the house where he lodged, "which seemed a very respectable one", was advertised in Glasgow and chosen because it was superintended by a fellow Scot who would understand his needs. Frew, in his letter home from London, wrote:

> We arrived at Euston Square at two and a half O'clock PM (sic) and in half an hour afterwards by a cab got lodged in this house which seems a very respectable one. We were thus seventeen and a half hours on the Railway, a pretty long drive - but after getting washed and dinnered here was almost as fresh as tho I had been in bed all night. The train was detained half an hour at Gartsherry waiting for the Aberdeen Mail train... - but after that they went at a rapid pace and reached Carlisle within time... proceeding on to London... to this town I continued awake but had a very sound sleep from Carlisle to Lancaster, more than two hours. When I awoke and began to learn the district we had betwixt those two Towns passed through I regretted we had not passed it in daylight, it being the most beautiful district in all England made more attractive by the residence there of Wordsworth and Southey - had it been light I suppose Skiddaw and Hellvellyn might have been seen from the railway.[11]

Not everyone of the features identified as part of the package holiday ethos was present in all working-class excursions and holidays but all would incorporate one or more of them.

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[11] Letter from Alexander Frew to his brother, London, 14 September 1851, Archive Notes, No 21, September 1983, Strathclyde Regional Archives, Glasgow

3.2 Motivations

The nineteenth century's mid-point as well as being the time when the population of England became mostly urban, was also of significance in the history of working-class politics. Only three years before, in 1848, there had been massive Chartist demonstrations calling for the extension of democratic rights, indicative of the European wide revolutionary surge of nationalist and democratic demands. In Britain, this movement had involved large numbers of artisans, independent tradesmen and skilled workers. From the peak of Chartist activity in 1842 and its resurgence in 1848, there was an apparent dramatic decline in political activity amongst the working class. There seems to have been a downturn in the class struggle during the period immediately following 1848 as evidenced by a report that the Financial and Parliamentary Reform Movement could not raise enough subscriptions for carrying on its campaign.[12] This was regarded by sections of the mainstream press as a sign of the "return of common sense to those classes who had hitherto been the dupes of a set of selfish demagogues". It is likely that the organisation and contact between groups and individuals remained but that their campaigning took on a different focus. For many it seemed that the demands of the People's Charter could not be met through traditional forms of struggle which often seemed to be attempts to turn back the tide of industrial and capitalist development. For these people it now seemed a more likely proposition that reform could be won by accepting the existing social order and attempting to change it by incorporation and constitutional means. This was also the outlook adopted by the new model unions which became prominent over the

[12] Stockport Advertiser, 31 January 1851

next few years, in particular the Amalgamated Society of Engineers from 1852.

Events in Europe and in England, after the arrival of émigrés post-1848, aroused a growing sense of internationalism among the English people. Socialist and radical newspapers devoted large sections to international issues and reports from the revolutionary movement overseas. It is possible that the very idea of the World Exhibition had been suggested by the sentiments advocated and popularised by Julian Harney and other advanced proletarian spokesmen. Writing in the 1920s, the labour movement historian and trade unionist, Theodore Rothstein asserted that it was "tolerably certain that the internationalist movement which arose among the liberal bourgeoisie about that time was greatly influenced by this proletarian propaganda and must be considered as a semi-conscious attempt at competition with it".[13] The bourgeoisie of that period also began to court trade unions and the cooperatives, endeavouring by fostering Mechanics' Institutes and popular libraries, as well as the publication of cheap literature, to wrest the working people from the intellectual influence of the still active "agitators". Other probable sources of inspiration for the Great Exhibition were the Mechanics' Institute exhibitions held in several provincial towns and cities between 1838 and 1840, which themselves where the inspiration for organised rail excursions (which in turn were to influence Thomas Cook)[14] and the "National Bazaar" of the Anti-Corn Law League held in Covent Garden

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[13] Theodore Rothstein, "From Chartism to Labourism", London, 1929, p158

[14] Susan Barton; "Mechanics Institutes - Pioneers of Excursion Travel", Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaelogical and Historical Society, November 1993, pp47-58, p48: J Pudney, The Thomas Cook Story, London, 1953, p53

in 1845 in which products were shown from all over Britain to celebrate a free trade theme. Excursion trains to London from the Midlands and North had also contributed to the success of the event. The Royal Society of Arts had already suggested a National Exhibition a few years earlier in 1845 but had met with no popular response or support for the idea.[15] It was acknowledged by the Royal society that it was the French National Expositions begun in 1798, which were the primary inspiration to all those later exhibitions.[16] The Royal Society itself had been using exhibitions to promote design and manufacture since the late eighteenth century. Patrons and commissioners of the Great Exhibition, such as Cole and Digby Wyatt had visited the Paris Exhibition in 1850 and reported their impressions to Prince Albert, the enthusiastic promoter of London's own world exhibition.[17]

The Royal Commission set up to organise the Great Exhibition had initially recommended the establishment of a Working Classes Committee in order to emphasise social harmony. The proposal was soon retracted. The short-lived Working-classes Committee had comprised two MPs, the Bishop of Oxford and the Chartists Lovett, Place and Vincent who had remarked that "the working-class regarded the Exhibition as a movement to wean them from politics".[18] However, the idea had caught on and working men went on to participate in the local groups which met

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[15] Scott Russell papers, II/218. A Report to the Royal Society of Arts, 1849. Quoted by R J Morris; "Leeds and the Crystal Palace", Victorian Studies, March 1970, pp283-299, p284.

[16] Paul Greenhalgh, Ephemeral Vistas, Manchester, 1988: Toshio Kusamitsu, "Great Exhibitions Before 1851", History Workshop Journal, Issue 9, Spring 1980, pp70-89:

[17] R J Morris, op cit, p286

[18] Quoted by Audrey Short; "Workers Under Glass", Victorian Studies, December 1966, p195

to discuss regional contributions to the exhibition. Every major town established a local committee to organise local arrangements for the Exhibition. Their functions included collecting financial contributions towards the cost, soliciting locally manufactured exhibits, promoting the event in their region, estimating the numbers likely to travel and liaising with the national organisers in London. Working-men's committees were often set up as sub-committees of the official local ones. Many former Chartists were involved in these, as were Mechanics' Institute members and workplace representatives. However, of the leading Chartists who were involved it was usually those associated with the right-wing of the movement or "moral force" section such as Place and Lovett.[19]

There were other Chartists however who welcomed the Exhibition for the opportunity it would give them for advancing their own ideas and the aims of socialism. At a large meeting of trades delegates in Glasgow, a number of men identified as Chartists, although disagreeing with each other on other issues, urged "the necessity of union and energetic action amongst all shades of democrats and the importance of improving the opportunity afforded by the Great Exhibition of spreading their principles, and helping forward the Great European struggle for liberty". For them, the Exhibition was perceived as presenting a means of reviving the Chartist organisation through providing an oppositional focus.[20]

A Central Committee of Social Propaganda had been formed in London with a number of local committees supporting it through raising funds. This body thought the congregation of so many visitors, including large numbers from

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[19] Audrey Short, op cit, p194.

[20] Friend of the People, 8 March 1851, p98.

overseas, presented a wonderful opportunity of spreading the socialist message, "What moment more opportune for promulgating these views so well calculated to make the world happy, than the time when the world is there to listen to you?"[21] The ageing but respected Robert Owen and others competent to develop the great principles of English Socialism agreed to give a series of public lectures on the theme during the Exhibition season. It was also intended to produce a series of tracts written by Owen in English, to be followed by French and German translations for distribution to their continental brethren.[22] As pointed out in an address to the social reformers of Great Britain printed in the Friend of the People, "As many come from countries where freedom of speech and press are almost unknown, such an opportunity for getting political and social information may be to them of double value".[23]

The desire for international unity was not just a hopeful wish of the British movement. The New York Industrial Congress passed a resolution in December 1850 that committed them to sending a delegation to London, "to meet in convention the delegates of trade societies and labour associations from other parts of the world, during the Fair of 1851, for the purpose of interchanging opinions with each other in relation to the state of labour, and the condition of the labouring classes in the various countries they represent". In February 1851, Parsons E Day was appointed delegate to London to where he travelled to meet with inventors clubs, trade societies and labour associations in order to make the arrangements for the

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[21] Friend of the People, January 1851, p59.

[22] Friend of the People, 19 April 1851, p168

[23] Friend of the People, January 1851, p59

convention of mechanics and working men to be held during the exhibition period.[24]

The aim of class unity and educational improvement was attractive to members of Mechanics' Institutes. This should not detract from the recognition that instead of being merely dupes of the ruling elite, these working class campaigners had their own political agenda; the fight for the franchise and for the consolidation and extension of the Ten Hour Day. Some class conscious workers also promoted the idea of "rational recreation" not as a means of social control but for self-improvement, a better quality of life and to use as propaganda to get support for shorter working hours. Education was seen as a political necessity, a reform to be fought for in opposition to the ruling classes who "Well know that Knowledge and Freedom go hand in hand, and therefore do they attempt to stem her liberty-bringing torrents fearful that they will sweep away the pillars of Ignorance and Prejudice on which the oligarchical power is based".[25]

Many other working-class militants were totally opposed to the Exhibition and the open class collaboration it seemed to involve. Julian Harney, writing as "l'Ami de Peuple" in the Chartist paper the Friend of the People, described the opening pageant which attracted crowds to watch the Royal Family's cavalcade pass by as being inspired by "the spirit of flunkeyism".[26] He went on to describe the "Works of art and plunder wrung from the people of all lands, by their conquerors, the men of blood, privilege, and capital". A truly worthy industrial exhibition could only happen when workers from all fields of industry and

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[24] Friend of the People, March 1851, p136

[25] Friend of the People, January 1851, p51

[26] Friend of the People, 10 May 1851, p189

agriculture had renounced flunkeyism and substituted for the rule of masters, and the royalty of a degenerated monarchy - "the Supremacy of Labour, and the Sovereignty of the Nation".[27] Surprisingly the other major Chartist newspaper the Northern Star makes no criticism in its coverage of the event but merely relates the discription as a factual news story.[28] Royal pageantry was set to become a tourist attraction in its own right in the future.

Many people believed that the exhibition would provide the ideal opportunity for working men to demonstrate not just their skills and intellectual capabilities in the design and making of objects for display, but also their respectability and responsibility through their behaviour. It was not just the middle class who despised drunkenness amongst the poor; class-conscious workers did too.

3.3 Plans and Preparations

Public meetings were held in many towns all around Britain, usually presided over by the mayor or other civic dignitary. Local Committees were formed in 297 different localities,[29] many of which had working-men's sub-

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[27] Ibid

[28] The Northern Star, 3 May 1851

[29] In order to get information about these I a "mailshot" was sent to over twenty record offices and archive libraries. This produced mainly negative responses to my requests for records relating to these committees or to workers' arrangements for visiting the Exhibition. However, I made some exciting and interesting finds, such as a complete Minute Book and accounts from Bolton and from Sunderland; from Manchester Reference Library, a collection of letters, leaflets and posters relating to the arrangements for the working classes and accommodation for artisans; rules and collecting cards from clubs in Salford, Bristol, Manchester and other towns as well as articles from provincial newspapers which I have used in

committees. In Leicester a meeting and lecture was held in the New Hall, a building used by the Mechanics' Institute, which was addressed by one of Her Majesty's Commissioners, Highmore Rosser.[30] Advertising announcements stressed that the meeting would be addressed particularly to the working classes whose attendance was invited on the occasion. Also on the platform were the Mayor and William Biggs, a former mayor and renowned radical, who was in favour of the extension of the franchise and who, demonstrating a pre-existing commitment to travel for workers and to the concept of exhibitions, had been a major supporter of Leicester Mechanics' Institute's Exhibition of 1839. He had been involved in the pioneering reciprocal rail excursions between Leicester and Nottingham where another exhibition was held concurrently. Numerous people attended the meeting at which John Matts was elected chairman of the Leicester working men's committee. A second public meeting in Leicester, specifically for the working classes, was held in the Town Hall with William Biggs in the chair.[31] Biggs was critical of the Royal Commission's demand for local collections to finance the exhibition; he thought the government ought to pay, not the people! A resolution was moved by Francis Warner: that a society be formed called the "Working Men's Provident Association" to enable the working classes of the town to visit the exhibition which would be a symbol of peace and harmony between nations and classes. Warner might have been the same Warner who was active in the Working Men's Chartist Association in

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this thesis. Full references of these items are given in footnotes where they are refered to in the text.

[30] Paynes Leicestershire and Midlands Advertiser and Leicestershire Mercury, 20 July 1850

[31] Leicestershire Mercury, 10 August 1850

Leicester.[32] He had been a physical force Chartist but in 1848 had split from the main Chartist group in the town.[33] In seconding the resolution proposing the formation of the Working Men's Provident Association, Mr Parker said he hoped that an equal number of the fair sex would go to London. Parker may have been the same Mr W Parker, the Leicester Anti-corn Law Association's working-men's secretary, listed in Thomas Cook's Guide to Leicester.[34] Parker had also been an active Chartist campaigner in 1848.[35] Someone called White read the rules drawn up by the committee since the July meeting; subscriptions were sixpence, ninepence or a shilling a week. John Matts (chair) had been in touch with other committees and the rules were therefore similar. Letters from committee secretaries requesting information from other committees seem to have been quite a feature of their initial actions, several examples have been found from places as diverse as Bath, Bristol, Oldham and Northampton.[36] Bolton Committee wrote to Northampton's for advice. Matts said that if a person saved sixpence a week for a year that would come to twenty-six shillings; out of this five shillings would be needed for the train fare. Although the lowest fare quoted was ten shillings, he was sure that it would be reduced. He hoped that lodgings could be arranged for sixpence a night, which would be three shillings and sixpence for a week. These figures are considerably less than those estimated by the Bolton

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[32] Leicestershire Chronicle, 17 June, 1848; J F C Harrison, Chartism in Leicester, Chartist Studies, ed Asa Briggs, London, 1959, pp99-146, p118

[33] Leicestershire Chronicle, 17 June, 1848

[34] Thomas Cook's Guide to Leicester, Leicester, 1843, (pages not numbered).

[35] Leicestershire Chronicle, 17 June, 1848

[36] Letters from all these places to other local committees are held at Manchester Reference Library, M6/3/10/--

committee which proposed one shilling and twopence a night for accommodation.[37] Admission to the Crystal Palace for a week would be two shillings and sixpence, leaving the rest (1s 6d a day) to live on. He hoped that five or six thousand working class people from Leicester would visit London and the Exhibition the following summer. Later in the same meeting Joseph Dare, the radical Unitarian minister, another supporter of reform, said there was no reason why every working man and woman should not go. Sadly, according to research by Robert Ingle, a trade depression in Leicester made it difficult for people to travel.[38] Ingle claims that many of the members of the Provident Association were compelled to cash in their savings to survive. Apart from Biggs and Dare, the occupations of the speakers are not known. Such skill and confidence in public speaking to a very large audience in such surroundings as the Town Hall[39] could indicate previous political experience in the radical and Chartist movements.

In Manchester the proposers of resolutions to the Working Men's Committee were themselves working men employed as mechanics in the area.[40] Their resolutions are worth

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[37] Bolton Chronicle, 17 August, 1851

[38] Robert Ingle, Thomas Cook of Leicester, Bangor, Gwynedd, 1991, p27

[39] The former Town Hall in Leicester is now known as the Guild Hall since a replacement was built in 1867.

[40] A handbill reporting a meeting held at the Mechanics' Institute records that resolutions passed were proposed or seconded by William Mellor and Thomas Greenhaugh, mechanics at Sharp Brothers; Robert Crichton and Jonathan Ogilvie employed by Messrs Fairburn; James Haughton and Charles Howarts in the employ of Messrs W and D Morriss and Jonathan Ryder and John Wrigley, mechanics at Sharp Brothers. Manchester Working Men's Committee, Handbill, 1850, Manchester Reference Library, M6/3/10/6

quoting in full as they encompass the main objects of most other committees which involved workers.

1 That we, as working men, feel gratified to find ourselves consulted upon a matter of such importance to the industrious classes of the whole world; and, if the co-operation of the employers can be obtained, we therefore pledge our exertions in furtherance of the object, so as to prove that the confidence of the commissioners is not misplaced.

2 That a committee of two men from each principal workshop and manufactory in Manchester be formed, to assist in carrying out the objects of the Great National Exhibition of 1851; such committee to meet on the first Friday of each month, in this Institution.

3 That the committee be requested to originate an active canvass amongst the artisans in our different machine shops and manufactories, to ascertain how many individuals, or associated bodies, will prepare specimens of their skill for exhibition, and to make a list of such articles, to be reported if possible at the second monthly meeting.

4 That it be an object with the committee to arrange for a cheap trip on a series of days, so as to allow all interested to visit the exhibition at the lowest possible cost.[41]

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[41] Ibid

Using their letters, leaflets and quotations in newspapers as evidence it seems that the committee members and those most active in the working men's groups were highly literate for the times in which they lived. It is more than probable that they would have been enthusiastic about an event that promised self-improvement. A chance to use their skills, to be taken seriously and to be given responsibility must also have been welcomed, especially if more political activity was no longer a viable interest. Although creating the basis for future operations in popular tourism, this was not on their conscious agenda.

In Bolton, an essay writing competition was held to commemorate the event. Mention of a sponsorship for this contest by a local man is in the Bolton Local Committee Minute Book although Audrey Short states it was organised by the Mechanics Institute.[42] On 9 October 1850 it was reported to the Local Committee that J R Bridson esq had intimated his intention to give a prize of books to the value of five pounds for the best essay written by a working man resident within the Union of Bolton on "The Advantages to be Derived by the Working Man from Visiting the Great Exhibition of 1851", to be adjudicated on by members of the Bolton Committee. No further mention of the essay occurs in the Minute Book but Audrey Short's reference cites Thomas Briggs as author of an essay with almost the same title ("attending" rather than "visiting" the Exhibition) published in Bolton in 1850.[43] Short

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[42] Audrey Short, op cit, p198

[43] No work by Thomas Briggs entitled "The Advantages to be Derived by the Working Man from Visiting the Great Exhibition of 1851" can be located either in Bolton or through the British Library. This may be the anonymous essay printed in Thomas Cook's Exhibition Herald which matches the descriptions given in other references. Cook tells the reader that it was written by a working man, a weaver from Bolton, and that it was the winner of a £5 prize given by the

states that the winner, Thomas Briggs, was a mill-wright, who expressed in his essay the hope that the exhibition of artisans' skills would lessen upper class objections to the extension of the franchise. It could no longer be claimed that workers were an ignorant rabble. The text of a similar essay by an unnamed writer appears in Thomas Cook's Exhibition Herald[44] with the title "Why Should Working Men Visit the Exhibition?". The article in the Exhibition Herald is described as only the first part of the essay and does not really go into political aspirations for the working class but, in extremely elevated and flowery terms, eulogises the benefits to be gained by skilled craftsmen on observation of the work of other skilled craftsmen.

> Friends and fellow countrymen - We live in strange times - in times when the different nations of the earth are called upon to wage war against each other; but not in deadly array - not in deluging our fertile fields and plains with the gore of our favourite sons -not in making widows, and orphans, and childless parents - not in creating famine, pestilence and disease; but in multiplying, in a thousand degrees, every source and avenue of human enjoyment, happiness and social ties. A war - who shall be the best Samaritan, and who shall excel in acts of charity, munificence, benevolence, and humanity, - war of love, of concord and affection.
>
> There are a number of you who ask "Of what use and benefit would be a visit for us (the working classes)?" I ask, in return, of what use are the rains and fertilising dews of spring to all the

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Mechanic's Institute of that town for writing about the benefits of the Great Exhibition.

[44] Thomas Cook's Exhibition Herald and Excursion Advertiser, No1, 31 May 1851, p2

> vegetable kingdom? Do they not make all animated nature to bud forth and themselves in all the splendour of their foliage and verdure? Do they not impart fecundity and fertility to the lap of nature, and cause the earth to bring forth her fruit in abundance?[45]

Many other commentators predicted that the contempt shown for tradesmen and mechanics would now end once the world could witness the skill involved in the production of artifacts for the exhibition.

Free traders believed that the exhibition would lead through more competition to a general fall in prices that would benefit working people, although protectionists predicted an influx of foreign goods and workers which would undercut the British. This last prediction was partly true because the glazing of the Crystal Palace itself was done by French workmen, brought in after a strike by the original English ones.[46]

Piracy of ideas, models, machinery and design was also a fear that had to be assuaged for the exhibitors. Protectionist sympathizers were still campaigning against the repeal of the Corn Laws five years earlier. A protectionist demonstration dinner held on the theme of the Protection of Native Industry at Tamworth Town Hall in June 1851, a month after the exhibition opened, was attended by 300 persons.[47] A rioting counter-demonstration of Free Traders throwing missiles through the windows broke the meeting up. The Protectionists took up furniture legs, pulled to pieces the banisters or

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[45] Cook's Exhibition Herald, op cit, p2

[46] Friend of the People, November 1850

[47] Stockport Advertiser, 6 June 1851

grabbed wine and soda-water bottles to arm themselves and went out to confront the crowd. A fight ensued, the mob pulled people attempting to leave from their horses and "several heads were broken".[48] Other Protectionist meetings were held around the country, including one at the Three Crowns in Lutterworth in August 1850.

At the public meeting of the Working Men's Committee in Leicester in August 1850 any doubts about foreigners which had been expressed were counter-argued by Mr T Goddard who said "That for every foreigner who got an advantage there would be a thousand Englishmen benefitting from seeing the works of foreigners".[49] However, the Stockport Advertiser complained there had been no "positive disavowal on the part of the Commission... that it may not be converted into a Great Foreign Bazaar".[50]

> We will suppose that foreigners, having had the trouble, and being at the expense to send over certain articles for exhibition, will carry them back, and not sell them for what they will fetch in this country - although we do not believe they will do so, however stringent the rules may be on this.[51]

It seems that for the majority free trade assisted by growing economic prosperity had led to a rise in living standards and greater numbers in secure employment which made the contemplation of a trip to London, regular savings for which demanded steady earnings, possible for many working people. In Leicester in 1850 there was

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[48] Stockport Advertiser, 6 June 1851.

[49] Leicestershire Mercury, 10 August 1850

[50] Stockport Advertiser, 30 August 1850

[51] Stockport Advertiser, 30 August 1850.

housing scarcity. No houses could be found to let as former sharers and yard occupants were moving out to their own singly-occupied homes.[52] This, in the eyes of free-trade supporters, disproved the protectionist argument that families could not afford separate homes. The following month, under the headline "Leicester Under Free Trade", that there was not a single able bodied pauper, male or female, in the Leicester Union workhouse was announced. The Guardians were having to hire women to do the workhouse washing. This had never happened before the Corn Laws' repeal.[53]

The evidence as to whether the economic state of the people was better or worse under free trade seems to be contradictory. The Stockport Advertiser reported widespread manufacturing distress and that the existence of "deep and wide-spread agricultural distress had ceased to be a point in dispute. The terrible retribution of the base principles on which Free Trade theory is built, is beginning to reach the very classes for whose alleged benefit the agricultural classes were so ruthlessly sacrificed".[54] It is worth remembering that the left wing of the working-class movement had not been very enthusiastic about the Corn Laws' repeal as they believed it to be a bourgeois move to keep down wages. About a thousand workmen in the clothing trade in Nottinghamshire were out of work, and as a consequence, when families were taken into account, four thousand people were destitute as well as there being even more in only partial employment. In Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Leicestershire there were at least three thousand glove makers (framework knitters) only two hundred of whom were

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[52] Leicestershire Mercury, 20 July 1851.

[53] Leicestershire Mercury, 10 August 1850.

[54] Stockport Advertiser, 20 June 1851.

in full employment and hundreds more who were on very low pay of two shillings, three shillings or four shillings a week.[55] It can be assumed that glovers on the whole would not be joining the working men's savings clubs to go to the exhibition as the subscriptions would be quite a high proportion of their wages. "Much good does the 'big loaf' do to the man who has a family to support on six or seven, maybe upon two or three shillings a week".[56] This distress was blamed on free trade and more distress was predicted because of the consequential destruction of the home market because of the impoverished condition of landlords and farmers and the various classes dependent on them, "Which may well blanch the cheek of thoughtful and human statesmen and even the flinty heart of a Free Trader".

For political reasons then, many working class activists and spokesmen joined, or indeed chose not to join, the local committees, established for planning the arrangements for the exhibition. As well as official committee involvement, the major participation of working people was in the workers' travel and savings clubs which were formed to enable those "of moderate means" to visit the Crystal Palace on the cheaper one shilling days during the summer of 1851. Many of these savings clubs were organised at community and workplace level.[57] A large number of them were supported by employers some of whom granted financial contributions and time off (in a few cases paid) to make the visit to London. Others

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[55] Stockport Advertiser, 20 August, 1851

[56] Stockport Advertiser, 20 August 1851.

[57] The Journal of Design and Manufacture, London, 1851, pp155-156 gives details of exhibition savings clubs in about 30 towns reported to the commissioners but this is obviously only a small proportion of the final total.

perhaps negotiated with their employers for these concessions.

Not everyone was in favour of this involvement by workers. There had been political argument as to whether the entry fee of one shilling would be enough to restrict entry to only the respectable working classes;[58] some middle and upper-class people were worried that the poorer and less desirable elements might be able to afford admission. There were fears of sedition and uprising, as well as of increased crime and unruly behaviour. The middle classes feared that the descent on London by large numbers of working people would attract the seditious elements not just from Britain but from abroad too, who would use the opportunity to stir up class hatred and rebellion amongst the congregated masses. The Press started to campaign against foreign "agitators" alleged to be planning a revolution for the occasion. Even Feargus O'Connor thought it necessary to join in the outcry and, in the Northern Star, warned Chartists to beware of the foreign revolutionary crowd and spies,[59] to the indignation of other Chartist groups such as Harney's Fraternal Democrats.[60] The French and other European revolutions of 1848 were still fresh in their minds and the change in political tactics by many radicals had not yet been acknowledged. For the middle classes, fears of social revolution were linked to the general worries of lawless and criminal behaviour by the working class. This itself, they believed, was a result of the moral degradation inherent in industrial life. Lord Ashley, who succeeded to the title of Earl of Shaftesbury in 1851, was convinced that everywhere he

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[58] Audrey Short, op cit, p199.

[59] Northern Star, 5 April, 1851

[60] Rothstein, op cit, p159

looked there was a "Wild and satanic spirit" abroad.[61] He was particularly concerned with the ill-behaviour of young people in the industrial areas, such as Manchester, Sheffield and the Potteries, and their involvement in violence associated with Chartist demonstrations. This idea has been given further credence by Charles Reith, the historian of the Metropolitain Police Force who asserted shortly after World War Two that:

> The peaceably disposed citizens of England during the first decades of the nineteenth century visualised the overthrow of civilisation by mob violence more fearfully and acutely than their descendents feared its overthrow a century later, by the violence of international war.[62]

The barrack master at Canterbury wrote to the Commissioners "with a special interest in the arrangements for working class visitors" outlining a complicated set of proposals for organising workers staying in London for the Exhibition. The Commissioners, however, were "indisposed to throw any restraint on individual plans or wishes" of visitors who after all would be coming at their own expense.[63] The barrack master, Captain James Thomas,[64] did not give up on his propositions, writing to the Manchester Committee calling

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[61] Geoffrey Pearson, "Hooligan, a History of Respectable Fears", London, 1983, p160

[61] Charles Reith, "Police Principles and the Problem of War, p48, quoted by F C Mather, "The Railways, the Electric Telegraph and Public Order During the Chartist Period, 1837-48", History, February 1953, pp40-53, p40

[63] Letter from Manchester Local Committee to Capt James Thomas, February 1851, Manchester Reference Library, M6/3/10/46

[64] Captain James Thomas (the signature is difficult to read), letter to Manchester Local Committee, 31 January 1851, Manchester Reference Library. M6/3/10/45

their attention to his suggested rules for the guidance of those classes on their arrival in London which "demand most serious attention for the production of numerous advantages". He doesn't state for whom the advantages would be. Captain Thomas suggested that a committee for working-class visitors be formed which would divide London up into neighbourhoods where, so far as possible, accommodation for the industrious classes should be in contiguous vicinities. These neighbourhoods were to be subdivided into districts corresponding with the counties and those districts be further divided into sections corresponding with the chief towns of each county. The actual number of beds provided in each section and district was to have been carefully ascertained. Local committees could judge the probable number of the working classes proposing to visit and these numbers could be divided by the total number of beds in each section so that they would be allocated an appropriate area in which to stay. A person appointed as a leader in each district would meet visitors from the trains and conduct them to their lodgings after explaining rules of behaviour. As far as possible apart from time at the Crystal Palace, working class visitors should stay in their own allocated area of London. Captain Thomas also thought it would be desirable that no carpets be laid in houses fitted up for working class occupancy, nor any woollen furniture used except for bedding. Floors and stairs were to be kept clean by daily rubbing with sand and a dry scrubber. He calculated that London could accommodate 55,000 working class visitors staying for two nights with a day allowed for turnover. He was convinced that the working classes would cheerfully fall in with these well intentioned plans for their comfort! One of his suggestions, however, was taken up by the Commissioners (probably independently) and that was that single women were to be lodged by themselves, superintended by matrons or lodged

with young families. Such elaborate preparations and precautions to ensure good behaviour proved to be either unnecessary or very successful. Polite London society was pleasantly surprised by the good behaviour of the crowds having feared the worst in drunken brawls from the invasion by the rough provincial masses. "Public lavatories had even been invented for the occasion to head off the risk of an uncontrollable flood of indecent exposures".[65] Sensitivities were respected and the toilets referred to as "waiting rooms".[66] Use of urinals for men was not charged for but waiting rooms cost a penny to use in the central area of the Exhibition and half that at more peripheral locations. A profit of £1769 18s 6d was made after attendence costs were deducted from the takings of £2441 15s 9d.[67] It was recorded that 827,820 people, mostly women, "spent a penny" or a half-penny. Not that many compared with the overall total of six million visitors to the Exhibition, only about fourteen per cent of them.[68] The number of men using the urinals is not recorded but would be at least equal and probably higher in total. These figures show the importance of "public conveniences" for any large scale event and the necessity of providing similar facilities whenever large numbers of people are congregated.

The excursions to London, of the kind organised by the travel clubs and Thomas Cook, were viewed in a high minded way as essentially uplifting educational visits. According to F M L Thompson, these trips were largely for

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[65] F M L Thompson, The Rise of Respectable Society, London, 1988, p261

[66] First Report of the Commission of the Exhibition of 1851, P.P. 1852, vol 26, Appendix 30

[67] Ibid

[68] Ibid

the "respectable" working classes.[69] Altogether, six million people visited the Great Exhibition,[70] a total that must have included a cross-section of society and of the working class. Not just artisans and their families made the visit to London, many factory hands and less skilled workers did so too. Not all of the well-behaved visitors would have fitted the "respectable" categorisation.

Despite middle-class fears and anxiety about large groups of workers gathered together, the event passed off peacefully. Even the public opening ceremony, performed by Queen Victoria, passed off without incident. It had been planned initially to hold it behind closed doors because of the worry of an assassination attempt at a time when the monarchy was not a particularly popular institution. An additional 150 policemen were recruited and extra troops were garrisoned to guard London but their presence for counter-revolutionary purposes was proved to have been unnecessary.[71] To the authorities' surprise, however, according to the First Report of the Committee for the Exhibition of 1851, crime actually decreased in London during the Exhibition year from the previous year's figures. More than half of the arrests made were for drunkenness. Incredibly there were only eleven reported thefts despite a total of approximately six million visitors.[72] Good behaviour was also in evidence at all the other sites in London, such as the National Gallery and British Museum, to which the masses also thronged as they made the most of their stay.

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[69] F M L Thompson, op cit, p261

[70] Audrey Short, op cit, p202

[71] Northern Star, 3 May 1851, p3

[72] Audrey Short, op cit, p202.

3.4 Savings and Travel Clubs - The Total Package

The workers' travel clubs were very successful. As well as organising the collection and saving of money, some of these groups also arranged the travel and accommodation for their members. In some cases the travel clubs were organised under the auspices of the official local committees; some committee members, as prominent citizens and employers, were able to push the idea of the Exhibition amongst their employees. Other clubs seem to have been independent working-class organisations, established spontaneously by enthusiasts. The many clubs operating from public houses would have been outside the sponsorship and control of employers.[73]

In Bolton, the accounts kept give a good gauge of the enthusiasm for the exhibition in individual workplaces as each contribution to both the General and the Operatives Funds is recorded.[74] The General Fund was used for subscriptions to be sent to London towards the costs of the Exhibition, after local expenses had been deducted. The Operatives' Fund was a local collection to enable people to work on preparing items for display by granting them the equivalent of wages for the duration of their projects and to pay for someone to go to London and assist in finding and inspecting lodgings and supervising

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[73] Examples found in Manchester Reference Library include the Feathers Club and The Albert Exhibition Club in Manchester, the Chapel Inn, Stalybridge. The Salford Working People's Association was run from the Albert Hotel (Salford Reference Library).

[74] The Bolton account of subscribers is useful as it gives a list of names and the place of employment of those workers likely to have been the most probable visitors to the Exhibition. Bolton Metropolitan Library, Arts and Archives, ref FZ 39/1.

the installation of exhibits.[75] These factory collections symbolise a commitment by workers to the idea of the exhibition; at the time of the initial subscriptions there was no guarantee that the Exhibition would even take place or that any travel clubs would be formed to enable the subscribers to go and see it for themselves. Many radicals, like Leicester's William Biggs, were very critical of the government and Prince Albert for expecting ordinary people to finance the Exhibition when it was the idea of the Prince and Government and for their own prestige.[76]

The People's Club was a travel club founded to enable Bolton working people and their families to go to London. The Club's intention was to secure a number of beds paid for in advance for the benefit of enrolled members. The club's officials approached the Bolton Local Committee Secretary, ex-mayor, William Rushforth, to act as its treasurer or trustee but he declined to accept the office without the sanction of the rest of the committee for whom he acted. A meeting between the Local Committee of Bolton and a deputation from the People's Club, represented by its secretary, Mr J Swift and Mr Kirkman, was held on 14 May 1851. From Bolton's records it is possible to deduce something about the People's Club representatives at that meeting. J Swift is probably the James Swift who donated sixpence to the Operatives Fund and a shilling to the General Fund and who was employed

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[75] Bolton Local Committee Minute Book, 1850-1851, Bolton Metropolitan Libraries, Arts and Archives, ref FZ 39/1
The most usual donation by operatives seems to have been 6d to each fund, although in the account book there are beside some firm's names a note saying "Men declined to give" and in some cases blank collecting cards were returned. Altogether £725 11s 8d was collected in Bolton.

[76] Leicestershire Mercury, 10 August 1850.

by Benjamin Hicks and Son at the Soho Ironworks, where four other Swift family members also seem to have worked. If this was so, it was likely that his companion was Joseph Kirkman, also employed at the Soho Ironworks, who had contributed sixpence to each of the funds.[77] Other Kirkman subscribers worked at William Gray and Son and Ridgeway Bridges Son and Company (Bleachers).[78] At Benjamin Hicks and Son a sense of community seems to have been fostered. The firm had its own brass band which was advertising its concerts in the local newspaper[79] and had shown a high company commitment to the Exhibition.[80] Benjamin Hicks won two medals for items exhibited for display. From the repetition of surnames in the same subscriptions list for Hicks, it seems probable that the firm employed several members of a number of families.

The Local Committee of Sunderland took similar steps to those of Leicester and Bolton to involve the working classes, acting on the advice of the circular from the Royal Commissioners on behalf of Prince Albert. The initial step was to convene a public meeting to which the industrial classes were explicitly invited. In March 1850, the Local Committee resolved to make the public meeting about the Exhibition known through the medium of circulars distributed generally in large manufactories

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[77] Bolton Local Committee Accounts from the Minute Book, Bolton Metropolitan Libraries, Arts and Archives, Ref FZ 39/1.

[78] Ibid

[79] Bolton Chronicle, 6 April 1850.

[80] From entries in the Bolton Local Committee's accounts it can be seen that the firm itself gave £20 in January 1851 and from collections among the operatives, £10 8s 3d in February followed by a further £2 given in June. To the Operatives Fund an even more generous donation from operatives of £18 17s 3d was given on 20 February of that year.

and advertised through local newspapers.[81] It also decided that a few workmen should be invited to work with the Committee and some employer committee members were requested to promote this among their workmen. Two men, William Armstrong and George Rochester were added to the Sunderland Executive Committee very early on in its existence, on 27 March 1850, because of their connection with the Association for collecting subscriptions to enable workmen to proceed to London and see the Exhibition. Presumably Armstrong and Rochester were two of these few workmen it had been proposed to co-opt. Unfortunately nothing more has been discovered about them. Their inclusion seems to have been an early example of working class incorporation. Like Bolton's, Sunderland's Committee seemed to be concerned with enabling working people to become involved in all aspects of the Exhibition, including facilitating the production of exhibits through financial support. As early as April 1850 at a Committee meeting a representation was made by Francis Gray Ross who hoped to make any medals which may have been needed, his object being to earn sufficient to enable him to go to London to visit the Exhibition.[82] The same meeting also heard a letter from Mr G R Taylor, who intended to contribute a model of the bridge and a lifeboat but would not be able to complete them without some assistance. Later, in October, a local fund was established for providing models of shipbuilding, Sunderland's staple industry.[83] The accounts for

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[81] Sunderland Local Committee Minute Book, 1850 -1851, Tyne and Wear Archives Service, Ref 745/1.

[82] Ibid.

[83] A Mr Hedley was one of those to benefit from this, receiving the equivalent of three weeks wages for the completion of a model; he received a payment of £6 so presumably a skilled worker's wages in Sunderland at that time were £2 a week. This is interesting as when the Committee members received a letter from Mr Harrison in December

Sunderland Local Committee show that the surplus left over in the funds was carried forward to a Paris Exhibition Fund in August 1851, seemingly forward thinking as the next Paris Exhibition was not held until 1855 but it demonstrates a commitment in Sunderland not just to the idea of exhibitions but to the concept of travel.[84]

A network of club and committee secretaries who solicited each other's advice when it came to dealing with the working classes developed.[85] From the collection of letters in Manchester, the usual topics of correspondence related to the desirability of having working men on the

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1850 advertising his Mechanics' Home lodgings for artisans, they resolved to write to him to express that in their opinion the charges were too high for working men. Posters and bills for the Mechanics' Home advertised charges of 1s 3d a night, not a huge sum compared with a wage of £2, only about 3.5% of a weeks pay. This seems comparatively less than the modern equivalent of very cheap bed and breakfast at about £20 related to £200 as an example of a normal skilled worker's pay; the cost has increased to 10% of income. The comments of the Bolton Local Committee show they seemed to expect about 1s 2d to be the normal rate to pay for lodgings, not much less than the Mechanics' Home charges. Maybe Hedley commanded a higher rate of pay than the usual rate in the locality because of his skills.

[84] Sunderland Local Committee Minute Book, 1850-51, Tyne and Wear Archives Service, ref 745/1

[85] Other evidence of workers' involvement on the official local committees comes from the "Miscellaneous" columns of the Journal of Design and Manufacture for 1851 (op cit) where short reports of information given to the Commissioners are given: in Aberdeen it was resolved at a public meeting that a Committee of twelve to be named by the working classes be added to the local committee; at Darlington it was resolved that a number of practical working men be invited to join the Committee; at Woolwich the foremen from the Royal Dockyard and the Royal Arsenal were added to the committee.

committees[86] and guidelines on the running of travel clubs.

Southampton Local Committee branched out to hold public meetings in the surrounding agricultural villages, where auxiliary committees were formed.[87] At the first such meeting for Shirley, Millbrook and the surrounding area, crowded by an audience made up almost entirely of the working classes, a collection of ten pounds was raised in the first few minutes by small sums. They were anxious to have a travelling fund established in connection with the Great Club at Southampton which by May 1850 had already enrolled seven hundred members. This is also the only report of both men and women being present at the same meeting, a large number of both sexes enrolled their names and paid the weekly subscription of one penny. The next week there was another such meeting at Romsey, where the mayor hoped to enrol hundreds more to assist in "this noble contest of mind over matter". As well as Southampton's Exhibition Travelling Fund, which entailed penny weekly subscriptions, another fund, called the

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[86] Letter from Bristol Local Committee to Manchester's, Manchester Reference Library. On the issue of workers on committees, the Bristol secretary wrote to Manchester's to ascertain what the effect of such a proceeding had been. For what reasons Manchester was the recipient of so many entreaties for guidance is unknown but I have ten copies of letters asking for information about the rules for travel clubs from such diverse sources as Oldham, Runcorn, Bristol, Bath, Dundee, Salford, Sheffield and from the Chapel Inn, Stalybridge. One man even wrote in on behalf of men in his singing classes! It is possible that the committees wrote to all the others but this seems unlikely as the letters are all handwritten; copying them out 297 times would have been an onerous task for even the most committed secretary. Bolton Committee had been in touch with Northampton's which supplied a copy of the rules upon which Bolton's own were based.

[87] Handbill, Southampton Local Committee, May 1850. Manchester Reference Library, M6/3/10/4.

Admission and Provision Fund, by which members will be enabled "to go to the door of the Exhibition with a silver key in the shape of a shilling" was established.[88] Presumably this entailed an additional subscription. The club at Whitehaven was charging one shilling a week subscriptions which seems a more realistic amount coming to two pounds twelve shillings compared to only four shillings and fourpence for a person saving with Southampton's for a year.

Not all the travel clubs had the large memberships required to meet the railway companies' requirements for groups to travel in parties of two hundred and fifty or two hundred. Letters were sent to Manchester from Warrington where only twenty people wished to travel and from Glossop where the Working Men's Club of the district did not amount to more than eighteen.[89] These clubs in smaller towns, with fewer members, had approached their local committee secretaries to enquire whether they could combine with similar larger clubs of Manchester excursionists.

Other savings clubs are described as operating in Bradford, Bridport, Bromsgrove, Northampton, Preston, St Austell, Stirling and Worthing.[90] Money clubs were often established independently of the local committees, frequently on the premises of public houses. The use of such locations may be because of the role that pubs had served as meeting places for trade unions. Landlords often looked after branch accounts as well as having

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[88] Journal of Design and Manufacture, London, 1851, p156.

[89] Collection of letters held at Manchester Reference Library

[90] The Journal of Design and Manufacture, 1851, pp61 -62, refers to similar movements in Carlisle, Glasgow and the Potteries. Similar visiting clubs were announced in Settle and in Bramley, Yorkshire (Leeds Mercury, 1 February 1851).

other social functions, such as organising the goose clubs. The reading aloud of newspapers often took place in pubs, which would have generated interest in the Exhibition. The landlord was usually a respected and literate figure in the community. Much information about the Exhibition would have been learned at newspaper readings or through conversation so it is therefore quite natural that the pub should have been the focus of local interest for many regarding the Great Exhibition, especially those working in small workshops rather than large factories.

One of the letters sent to Manchester's Local Committee asking for information about clubs was sent from the Chapel Inn, Stalybridge.[91] In Bradford, in March 1850, a club was established at the Hope and Anchor Inn where five pound monthly shares were demanded which seems quite a high price. Similar clubs were to be formed at various inns in the town and neighbourhood.

> The promoters of these clubs earnestly entreat all artisans who can make it convenient to become members,... to secure the necessary funds to enable them to visit the Great Exhibition... which is so well calculated to improve the moral and intellectual condition of all classes.[92]

From Manchester, a handbill and rule card for the Feathers Exhibition Club shows that such a club was established at the Feathers Inn, Deansgate, the house of William Hancock.[93] Mr Hancock, the landlord was listed

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[91] Letter from Landlord of Chapel Inn, Stalybridge to Manchester Local Committee, Manchester Reference Library, M6/3/10/32

[92] Journal of Design and Manufacture, pp61-62

[93] Handbill, advertising The Feathers Exhibition Club, Manchester, 1851, Manchester Reference Library, M6/3/10/40.

as treasurer of the club whose shares were a shilling a week. Copies of the rules were available at the bar of the house for a penny. The Committee met at the Feathers every Monday evening from 30 December 1850 for the purpose of collecting subscriptions. Members were charged in addition to their shilling, a penny a week for expenses, a penny a week fine was also to be imposed on shares not duly paid up. If a member wanted to withdraw his share a fine of 2s 6d was imposed or a sixpence fee to transfer the shares to someone else. This was obviously a club suitable only for those in secure, steady employment. The Club would continue for seven months, until 30 July 1851, when members unable to go to London would get their money back.

Another Manchester organisation was the Albert Exhibition Club whose fortnightly subscription was five shillings for full shares until thirty shillings had been be paid and two shillings and sixpence fortnightly until fifteen shillings were paid for half shares.[94] Full shares covered the cost of the journey, bed and breakfast for six nights, Exhibition catalogue and conveyance to the lodgings, in effect a full package deal; half shares included only the cost of railfare, members to make their own arrangements as to accommodation. Membership of this club cost a shilling which included a copy of the rules and, interestingly, a guide to all the free exhibitions and places of interest in London.[95] This club would give members according to priority on the books, a choice of lodgings in May, the rest to be drawn for the week before going away. The headquarters of this club seems to have been a private house, 25 Abrahams Court, Market Street,

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[94] Handbill advertising The Albert Exhibition Club, Manchester, 1851, Manchester Reference Library, M6/3/10/41.

[95] Ibid

the home of Richard Stanley who styled himself "Manager and Conductor".[96]

The Bristol Association in Connexion (sic) with the Great Exhibition of 1851 allowed members to pay in instalments of sixpence at any convenient interval.[97] The secretaries and receivers of this club all appear to have been shopkeepers of some sort and include a salt store keeper, stationer, two booksellers, three grocers, eight druggists, a linen draper, brushmaker and an oil and colourman. Why druggists should be involved so frequently is a mystery. Bristol people could visit London for 9s 10d return by train. The Association would try to provide comfortable and economical accommodation for members during their stay.

Salford Working Peoples' Association had the patronage of civic dignitaries as trustees, patrons and treasurer: the mayor; an MP; the ex-mayor; several aldermen and councillors.[98] The honorary secretaries and half the trustees though had no titles and were presumably working men. This club again had its committee room in a public house, The Albert Hotel, New Bailey Street, Salford. Members this time paid two shillings and sixpence per week and at the appointed time would receive two pounds nine shillings together with a railway ticket to give them seven days in London, leaving on the first Saturday in July. If membership were to exceed two hundred and fifty a second train would be arranged for the following Saturday. It seems that Salford people had to make their

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[96] Ibid

[97] Handbill advertising the Bristol Association in Connexion with the Great Exhibition of 1851, Manchester Reference Library, M6/3/10/7.

[98] Handbill advertising the Salford Working Peoples Association, Salford, 1851, Manchester Reference Library, M6/3/10/36.

own accommodation arrangements. This club did not charge any expenses or fines in the case of non-payment.

The Peoples' Exhibition Club of Bolton has already been described as charging one pound fourteen shillings in June and one pound nine shillings afterwards for transport and accommodation, club membership costing one shilling and sixpence.[99] The Bolton Local Committee put a notice in the paper giving advice to workmen saving for a visit to London using a different tack to encourage people to go; they claimed that if a person were to "Neglect to avail himself of the advantages offered, he will be in a worse position than his fellow workmen who embrace them", presumably in terms of intellectual development. "The Exhibition would thus injure him if he refuse to benefit from it"[100] it was emphasised. The Bolton Committee estimated four pounds as the sum required for a weeklong visit to London: a pound for the journey; eight breakfasts (at sixpence), eight dinners (at a shilling), eight suppers (ninepence) totalling one pound for food; six nights bed (at one shilling and twopence) and malt liquor or tea (a shilling a day), making sixteen shillings; admission to exhibitions and a steamer trip on the Thames another pound; plus four shillings extra for spending. In order to enable savings to be made of this amount, the Committee recommended an early start, saving one shilling and sixpence halfpenny a week for a year. The Committee's estimated prices seem very high, compare their one shilling and twopence for accommodation with John Matts of Leicester's guess of sixpence a night.[101] It could be that Matts was not an experienced traveller whereas some of Bolton Committee's

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[99] Bolton Chronicle, 17 August, 1851.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Leicestershire Mercury, 10 August 1850.

middle class members might have been giving them more of an idea of prices; the Mechanics' Home charged one shilling and three pence a night so the Committee was not far out in its estimate. The Committee had printed blank savings cards to be adopted by any club; they recommended that people of the same trade and of a similar age join in groups of not more than twenty people to open savings accounts, the interest to be shared. This was evidently before the LNWR announced its rules for reduced fares for travelling clubs.[102] Presumably any small clubs combined with others. Not all clubs, however, would have needed to use the services of the railway companies; groups from Scotland had the choice of steam boats at reduced fares despatched to London during the Exhibition season. The Stirling Club collected one shilling a week to include fare and lodging, so it seems that steamboat fares compared favourably with train fares bearing in mind the extra distance involved to and from Scotland.[103]

Thomas Cook himself also offered assistance to exhibition clubs. In his published recollections[104] he describes how for three months prior to the Exhibition's opening, he visited the principal towns of the Midlands and the Northern Districts for the purpose of assisting in the formation and furtherance of such clubs. He was in touch with the "Gentleman at the Home Office" with whom registration of lodgings was entrusted (presumably Alexander Redgrave); he was also a leading figure in the Great Railway Campaign which inspired competition between the LNWR and the Great Northern in a hot price war, with campaigners in Yorkshire using the slogan "Five shillings

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[102] Cicular from London North Western Railway sent to Manchester Local Committee, 1851, Manchester Reference Library, M6/3/10/17.

[103] Journal of Design and Manufacture, 1851, p156.

[104] Thomas Cook, "Twenty Years on the Rails", Leicester, 1860, p9, University of Leicester Library.

to London and back", a campaign which was ultimately successful.[105]

Travel clubs offered members a large range of facilities that differed from place to place: some simply offered a savings bank facility; others bulk purchase of cheap excursion train fares; some secured both transport and accommodation; others offered a complete package of transport, accommodation, Exhibition ticket and catalogue, guide books and the help of an appointed person in London. In effect some offered a fully inclusive tour or package, such as the Albert Exhibition Club in Manchester which arranged train travel, six nights' bed and breakfast, an Exhibition catalogue and conveyance to the lodgings.[106] These differences probably account for the different subscription rates. Another reason for this variance could be the date of formation of the club giving a longer or a shorter time in which to save up. Distance from London could also have been a factor, train fares from Bristol to London were cheaper for instance than from Manchester to London. Train fares were also cheaper from July onwards and so date of departure would have had an effect on costs.[107] Some savings might even have included an amount to compensate for loss of income while off work or perhaps some spending money.

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[105] Ibid: Thomas Cook's Exhibition Herald and Excursion Advertiser, op cit, p7-8

[106] Albert Exhibition Club, Manchester, Handbill, 1851, Manchester Reference Library, M6/3/10/41

[107] Cook's Exhibition Gazette and Excursion Advertiser, op cit, p8

3.5 Lodgings in London

So imperative was the need to provide suitable and respectable lodgings for working people that the Royal Commission appointed Alexander Redgrave, a factory inspector of the Factory Branch of the Home Office to superintend the arrangements through the setting up of a special agency in London to correspond with the local committees.[108] The function of this agency was to furnish all necessary information with respect to lodgings, their quality and price, and to regulate the dates for the various cheap trips from the large manufacturing districts, so as to subdivide as much as possible the immense numbers that would be converging on London. This would require providers of accommodation to register with the Central Agency. The Royal Commission was in no way involved with the actual arrangements, only gathering and providing information, which they disseminated through the local committees. A staff of officials canvassed every desirable street and place throughout London, and a complete registration of the amount of accommodation was placed at the disposal of the registry, which after careful dissection, was classified for the convenience and, it was hoped, security of visitors. Typically of the Victorian middle classes, the Registry was particularly concerned with morality and respectability. As well as hoping to assist visitors find material comfort and security, it was hoped that the system of enquiry would "prevent respectable persons locating themselves in houses of doubtful reputation".[109] The registration form for lodging houses for artisans

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[108] Journal of Design and Manufacture, op cit, p192.

[109] Circular of the London Central Registry, London, May 1851, Manchester Reference Library, M6/3/10/58.

asked for details of whether the accommodation was for married couples, single men or single women. The regulations for registration required that the different categories of visitor be lodged separately; families and couples, single men and women to be distinct. In no case could single men and single women be lodged in the same house. Lodgings for females had to be superintended by a married woman. Only the names of persons of good character would be received and references would be required before registration and a system of inspection was also instigated. As well as a register of lodgings, Manchester Committee also received from Pankhursts, Estate Broker, the offer of a register of erratic lodgers as a guide for prospective renters out of property showing them tenants who had previously fleeced their landlords.[110]

A range of accommodation was on offer, even within the category designated for the working classes. The cheapest of those for whom a prospectus has been found, was that supplied by H Castle & Co on Baltic Wharf, Westminster where for a shilling a night two hundred men at a time could be accommodated in sleeping apartments fitted up in the style of Emigrants' Ships.[111] The advantage of accommodating no more than two hundred was given as being the most likely number conveyed at one

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[110] Circular from Pankhurst's Estate Broker, received by Manchester Local Committee, 1851, Manchester Reference Library, M6/3/10/12.

[111] Prospectus produced by H Castle & Company, Baltic Wharf, Westminster, 1851. For only 1s a night, each man had a berth to himself, a flock bed, pillow, blanket, two sheets and a coverlet - all clean! Breakfast though cost an additional 9d. Guests could bring their own cheese, biscuits, coffee and the like for which a store room was available. No smoking was allowed in the building or on the wharf; to smoke a man had to go on to a ship lying beside the wharf, the decks of which made a good promenade (H Castle & Co., Handbill, 1851, Manchester Reference Library, M6/3/10/53).

time from any one establishment (or club). This would reduce the likelihood of disagreement which might result if several large bodies of men were accommodated together. In other words to prevent local rivalry developing into fights.

This facility on Baltic Wharf was probably only a temporary installation for the duration of the Exhibition and was probably one of the "temporary erections, such as tents and Emigrants' Houses" to be set up, as described in the Circular of the London Central Registry.[112] Vast numbers of tents were also to have provided a place to stay for the poorest or those who did not book early enough. All lodgings would have been at a premium with a massive influx not just from within Britain but from all over the globe. The Belgium government was paying for some Belgian artisans to go to the Exhibition to expand their knowledge and skills;[113] groups from Paris and Spain were also expected.[114]

Samuel Herapath fitted up two large houses with 80 to 100 beds in Holborn for the purpose of accommodating people of moderate means.[115] John Parker, a carpenter and builder of Commercial Road East, wrote to Manchester offering accommodation for 150 artisans with dining, smoking and reading rooms in a fine, open and healthy part of London for half a guinea a week, each person

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[112] Circular of the London Central Registry Office for House Accommodation for Visitors to the Exhibition of the Works of All Nations, London, 1851, p5, Manchester Reference Library, M6/3/10/58

[113] Journal of Design and Manufacture, 1851.

[114] Northern Star, 10 May 1851.

[115] Handbill advertising Samuel Herapath's lodging house, 1851, Manchester Reference Library, M6/3/10/16.

having a bed and washing convenience to himself, boots cleaned and hot water.[116]

The Clarence Club House for Artisans and Others offered a distinct apartment with bed, bedding, basin, soap and towels and box with lock and key for two shillings a night for parties of at least ten.[117] This detached mansion had nearly an acre of grounds for the use of residents in what is now the site of Ranelagh Gardens.

Jones's of Rochester Row was advertised as being conducted upon a similar principal to that approved by Col Reid and Mr Redgrave with reference to the Mechanics' Home.[118] It would take in a hundred guests a night but this could be doubled if necessary. For two shillings a night, artisans could sleep in dormitories on a bedstead with a hair or wool mattress, sheets, blankets and coverlid and make use of a smoking and bagatelle room. The engraved picture on the advertising poster shows a smart building with hanging gas lanterns outside, headed by the name "Jones, Wine & Spirit Merchant". The poster is bordered by a list of and information about the attractions of London such as the galleries, museums, Madame Tussauds and other places of interest.

The most well known of the lodging places was the Mechanics' Home, Ranelagh Road, Pimlico run by Thomas Harrison. A handwritten letter from Harrison to the Manchester Committee included a prospectus for an establishment he had just formed saying he would be

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[116] Letter from John Parker sent to Manchester Local Committee, Manchester Reference Library, M6/3/10/60.

[117] Advertising handbill produced for Clarence Clubhouse, 1851, Manchester Reference Library, M6/3/10/61.

[118] Handbill advertising Jones, Rochester Row, 1851, Manchester Reference Library, M6/3/10/51.

taking bookings from 1 March.[119] In the dialect book "Tom Treddlehoyle's Trip to Lunnan",[120] Tom's opinion of the Mechanics' Home was that its appearance was too much of a mechanics' home.

> It wor ta factoryfied ah thowt; a thing which t'mechanics owt ta hev aght a ther seet an aght a ther mind when tha go ta Lunnan.[121]

The inside was much more to his liking, he :

> Wor better pleaz'd a good deal wit inside then t'aght". His view of the thousand folks asleep at night was "my wurd but wot an a snorin choras theal be abaght two o'clock it morning.[122]

All the accommodation for which prospectuses have been found was for single men. Presumably accommodation for

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[119] Letter from Thomas Harrison, dated 6 December 1850 and prospectus sent to Manchester Local Committee. The poster format prospectus describes the accommodation as occupying two acres in a perfectly airy, well-ventilated situation. For 1s 3d, up to 1,000 guests a night slept in dormitories, arranged so as to give privacy. A smoking room where ale and porter could be purchased also had a band playing in it every evening. Mr Harrison made "effectual provision for the comfort, convenience and discipline" of the large body of men resident there. The premises on the engraving on the publicity bills show what appears to be a riverside warehouse, next door to Cubitt's works on the accompanying map,(Thomas Harrison's Mechanics' Home Prospectus, 1851), Manchester Reference Library, M6/3/10/19-20-21.

[120] Tom Treddlehoyle aka Charlie Rogers, "Tom Treddlehoyle's Trip ta Lunnan", published by Alice Mann, Rochdale and Leeds, 1851, pp54-55

[121] Either immediately before or after the Exhibition, the site was used as the Thames Bank Depository for storage of goods, although now the site near Vauxhall Bridge is occupied by Churchill Gardens and a school (Mechanics' Home Prospectus and Map, 1851) and (London A to Z), M6/3/10/63.

[122] Ibid

single women could have been provided with similar arrangements to those already described. A special register of furnished lodgings and apartments produced by Eversfield and Horne lists rooms to rent in private houses, many of which would be suitable for families. This register was like the accommodation lists contained in tourist town brochures or accommodation agencies today. Lodgings or apartments were available in all price ranges from mansion houses with rooms for the servants to shared bedsits. Some seem to have been run like boarding houses, perhaps by genteel families fallen on hard times such as the lady and gentleman (without family), Mr and Mrs Buckland of Euston Square. They lived in a comfortable and elegant home with 17 large rooms where there was promised cheerful and good society. They offered terms from £1 11s 6d to £2 2s 0d a week in their highly respectable accommodation. They were apparently well educated as they advertised French and German spoken.[123]

3.6 The Trip to London - the Tourist Experience

The Exhibition must have presented a golden opportunity for Londoners with initiative to improve their finances. Perhaps too easy an opportunity for some people, who feared not for London with this influx of strangers of doubtful respectability but for the safety of the visitors at the mercy of worldly Londoners. The story of the honest northern artisan wandering in London, pocket picked and baggage stolen, victim of the cunning Londoner, false friend, with his theatres, dens of vice and drink was a common theme of the almanac and chap

[123] Accommodation List, Eversfield and Horne, London, 1851, Manchester Reference Library, M6/3/10/59

book;[124] it also conjures up images of Oliver Twist and the Artful Dodger or Pinocchio and the fox and cat. In both stories an innocent arrival in the city is led astray and exploited by worldly criminals, disguising themselves as friends. The image is of the almost childlike innocence of workers, vulnerable to evil influences and ready to be led astray once away from the control of the middle classes and out on their own. These anxieties reflect the fear of foreigners aspect of the package holiday ethos. Crime figures showed remarkably few thefts around the Exhibition site and in London during the summer of 1851,[125] but the figures may not give a true indication of the actual level of crimes committed. It is not recorded how people might have been robbed in other ways, by paying over the odds for food, drinks, accommodation or souvenirs. Statistics for this kind of "dishonesty" were not recorded as crimes. The police only kept details of crimes which could be solved, even thefts, at that time were usually not recorded as such, the police preferring to list them as "lost property" until the 1930s.[126]

All other attractions in London, including omnibuses and steam boat services received a boost in business during the summer of 1851, Schweppes soft drinks became a household name after becoming the sole provider of liquid refreshment at the Crystal Palace.[127] Even the Mechanics' Institutes in London played their part by opening their doors free to members from the provinces and foreigners during the Exhibition season.

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[124] Supplement to the Leeds Mercury, 1 February 1851.

[125] Audrey Short, op cit, p202.

[126] Geoffrey Pearson, "Hooligan, A History of Respectable Fears", London, 1983, p218

[127] Stockport Advertiser, 10 May 1851.

For most of the working-class visitors this would have been their first experience of a "holiday" away from home although most would have been on excursions or work's outings,[128] or even been one of the twenty thousand people who went to the Chartist Rally and camp at Mountsorrel Hill to hear the speeches of Ernest Jones and Feargus O'Connor in early September 1850.[129] Going to London and actually staying there for several days must have been quite an adventure and a completely new experience for the working-class travellers. The main obstacle to holidaying away from home would have been not just the actual cost but the loss of wages while not working. Any time off had to be saved up for in order to pay normal household bills while away. This would have been no exception while people were away at the Exhibition. An article in Thomas Cook's Exhibition Herald discussed the problem of time off for workers that posed the question "how shall the people be spared from their employment with the least injury to business and the future comfort of the workpeople themselves?"[130] A working man of Leicester who wrote on behalf of a number of warehousemen and others, suggested that their employers should at least allow them wages for the time they would be absent, so that on their return their families would not be destitute of the week's supplies. Some of the savings clubs with higher subscriptions might have taken this into account and included an amount for

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[128] Such as the day trip to Bradgate enjoyed by the hands of Mr Chapman, worsted spinner of Leicester in July 1851, or on a rail excursion to the races, or the annual treat to Ward's End Field to enjoy a picnic and games for the hands of Paget and White of Loughborough, (who couldn't have thought much of their employer's generosity as they were on strike over wages the following week) (Paynes Leicestershire and Midland Advertiser, 5 July 1851).

[129] J F C Harrison, Chartism in Leicester, in Asa Briggs Chartist Studies, op cit, p120

[130] Thomas Cook's Exhibition Herald, No 1, 31 May 1851, p7

this. Some employers gave time off especially for the Exhibition, encouraging their employees to go. Some even gave money towards the expenses, while others even went so far as to give paid time off in what appear to be the earliest examples of holidays with pay; most books on the subject put this development as coming from 1885 onwards.[131]

Rail fares from the provinces to London became lower and lower with increasing demand. The fare from Yorkshire was eventually down to only five shillings, showing the

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[131] There are examples of time off with pay from Leicester, which must have been repeated elsewhere around the country. Berridge and Macauley gave £5 to their clerks and leave to go to the Exhibition as did the bankers Parsons and Dain, clerks at Adcock and Dalton were also given leave; these seem all to have been white collar workers. But in what is undoubtedly one of the first examples of a paid holiday anywhere in the world for manual workers, Goodwin and Hobson, brewers, of Leicester gave each man in their employ four day's holiday with pay and the rail fare to go to London (Paynes Leicestershire Advertiser, 5 July, 1851). To allow the police to visit the Exhibition, the Leicester Watch Committee gave one week's unpaid holiday in rota to enable them to visit in groups of ten. Gentlemen and ladies headed by the mayor collected towards the costs of the journey and leave for them and the town servants. This arrangement was also made for the police in Hull. In the London area, J T and H Christie and Company, a firm of hatters in Gracechurch Street gave a one day holiday on a Monday in May to the whole of the 600 or more persons in their employ. The company paid the cost of admission and conveyance to the building (Northern Star, 31 May 1851, p5). In June, a coal merchants, Smith and Son, gave a day off on a Tuesday to their 200 employees, paying the admission costs, providing refreshment, conveyance and to round the day off, an evening supper (Northern Star, 28 June, 1851). The Great Western Railway gave its officers four days leave to make the visit; Hodges the distillers gave all men in their employ a day's holiday and 5s towards their expenses; agricultural workers from several estate villages were also brought up, (Northern Star, 7 June, 1851, p5). This giving of expenses seems a compromise of the concept of paid leave.

effect of high load factors on the price of transport combined with competition between the different railway companies, the London North Western and the Great Northern. This happened because of public and political pressure, which insisted that as many working people as possible should have the opportunity to visit the Exhibition. The suppliers clearly accepted that there was a highly elastic market and thus, by reducing ticket prices, even more of them would be sold. The papers report pawn brokers were doing a brisk trade as the poorer people scrimped and saved to get the fare together. A labourer from Huddersfield who could not afford time off work, made a forty hour trip to London at a cost of six shillings according to contemporary newspaper reports. He took an overnight train sleeping on the way down for a fare of five shillings. He went to the Exhibition paying a shilling admission, he ate his own supply of sandwiches and took no lodgings so spent nothing while he was there other than on the entrance fee. He returned to Huddersfield that night ready for work the next morning![132]

It wasn't just the Exhibition that attracted hordes of visitors to the metropolis; many provincials saw the sights of London for the first time. Like modern package holiday destinations, the city provided a wealth of excursion opportunities. A letter from someone styling himself "Mechanicus" appeared in the Leeds Mercury calling for the government to open up public buildings free of charge to all visitors during the exhibition season. He (or she) also urged the Mechanics' Institutes and other working mens groups to give lectures to working people about the attractions and sights of London, giving historical and other information to enable them to get

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[132] Paynes Leicestershire and Midlands Advertiser, 5 July 1851

maximum enjoyment and education from their visits to the capital. This would prepare them not just for a nine days wonder but an experience, the memory of which could give fulfilment throughout the rest of their lives.[133]

The opportunity offered for self-improvement through the event's enlightened message of material, cultural and moral progress and peaceful international competition, was always emphasised as a justification for the trip.[134] Arguments about the benefits to workers who might enhance their skills and craftsmanship through seeing examples of the best and most up-to-date products and techniques were used to persuade employers to grant time off to those wishing to go on trips to London.[135] Despite the language of rational recreation and self-improvement, the visit to London was a tourist experience and not just an educational outing to the Exhibition. All the lodgings described earlier emphasised in their publicity how conveniently situated they are not just for Hyde Park and the Crystal Palace but for steam boat trips along the River Thames to other attractions, proximity to omnibus routes was also emphasised and maps were supplied showing places of interest. Guide books were available as well as advice on the economical use of time. The fictitious Tom Treddlehoyle certainly made the most of his time: he visited St Pauls; Westminster Abbey; the Tower; the British Museum; the Coliseum; the Thames Tunnel and Barclay's Brewery.[136]

In his diary, William Andrews records, after winning a prize of a visit to the Exhibition from Coventry Design School, that he spent the first day travelling, the

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[133] Supplement to the Leeds Mercury, 1 February 1851.

[134] F M L Thompson, op cit, p261

[135] Cook's Exhibition Gazette and Excursion Advertiser, Op Cit, p3

second on a river trip to London Bridge and a walk round the Tower and the City (it was a Sunday, though) and did not go to the Exhibition until Monday, the third day of his visit.[137] Afterwards, on the same day he went to see Buckingham Palace, the Serpentine and Kensington Gardens. On Tuesday he took a steamer trip to Gravesend. Next he visited a warehouse in Wood Street, the Guildhall, the Thames Tunnel, St Pauls Cathedral where he ascended the dome, Westminster Abbey, the National Gallery, the British Museum and the Zoological Gardens. He had obviously received and taken note of the advice on the economical use of one's time in London! On Thursday, his last full day in London, he went with his father to the Exhibition once more, returning to his Battersea lodgings by steamer. The next day he returned home, having been to the Crystal Palace only twice in six days. William Andrews was a conscientious and educated artisan, keen on all aspects of self-improvement, but most of his time he spent on what must have been a mad rush around the London tourist trail. Maybe his hurry to see everything implies that he did not expect the opportunity to go back to London again. Andrews describes this as the longest journey he had ever undertaken. Later in his diary for the year 1857, Andrews was also to describe a later visit to the Paris Exhibition, so London was not destined to remain the longest journey of his life for long.[138]

Looking back in later life on the experience of visiting the Exhibition, another Coventry ribbon weaver, Joseph Gutteridge, related how his:

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[136] "Tom Treddlehoyle's Trip ta Lunnan", op cit, pp41-54.

[137] The Diary of William Andrews, Master and Artisan in Victorian England, Coventry, published 1969, pp14-15

[138] The Diary of William Andrews, op cit, pp21-22

> Delight and pleasure at seeing this varied collection of products from every part of the world was unbounded. However much the wonderful structure of glass and iron... might have been admired - it seemed almost a realisation of one of the gorgeous pictures of the Arabian Nights - the treasures it contained... surpassed anything previously conceived or read about and kept his mind in a state of continual excitement for some time.[139]

3.7 Conclusion

The visits to the Great Exhibition indicate various aspects of the development of tourism. Savings clubs, large scale venues, major national events, and also the ethos of the package holiday can be demonstrated to have their roots in the visits arranged for the Great Exhibition. Some travel clubs quoted an all in price for transport, accommodation and admission to the Exhibition. One reason stated by tourism textbooks for the success of inclusive tours is the traveller's fear of foreigners, strange food and cultures. Fear of Londoners was expressed by a minister, J H Morgan of Leeds, who thought the natives might corrupt or trick the unwary visitor not familiar with London ways. He spoke of the need to protect them "From the serious disadvantages which will at once occur to those who know what London is - what it is to be dropped from a railway train, a perfect stranger to the place and its ways, from a railway train in the middle of that vast wilderness".[140] Others were worried about the strange London foods, contaminated milk and water. As late as 1877 the Local Government Board found a quarter of milk examined contained excessive water or

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[139] The Autobiography of Joseph Gutteridge, Ibid, p142

[140] Supplement to the Leeds Mercury, 1 February 1851.

chalk; ten per cent of bread and more than eight per cent of butter was contaminated and more than half of all gin had copper in it to heighten the colour.[141] This probably accounts for the desire by visitors to stay with people from their own locality and to eat familiar foods. Fear of foreign food and insecurity among strangers are factors that package holidays try to overcome.

For many people in London for the exhibition, this was the first time they had encountered foreigners, particularly non-white people. Contemporary accounts include comments which demonstrate genuine curiosity, surprise and interest in people of other races and cultures rather than malice. J T Staton's Tom Treddlehoyle describes how a friend he was with "wor off like a lamp-leeter, an a throng starin at a black man".[142] All the nations that contributed to the Exhibition had their own defined area under the country's name.[143] This and the overseas exhibits could have served as a stimulus to travel as the horizons of the visitors were broadened and they became aware of places and cultures beyond Britain.

It is from the Great Exhibition that the mass tourism of modernity, involving large numbers of people travelling and staying away from home for several days seems to derive. Accommodation at reasonable rates providing homely food had to be provided. Transport often provided by rail charter was required for longer journeys. Thomas Cook was one of a number of tour operators who met the demands of travelling workers. Some of the travel and savings clubs and local committees made their own

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[141] A S Wohl, Endangered Lives, London, 1983, p53.

[142] J T Staton's "Tom Treddlehoyle's Trip Ta Lunnan", op cit, p19.

[143] Ibid, pp 26-33

arrangements, others made use of the facilities offered by tour operators such as Cook. Some of the local groups seem to have made profits although there were others such as Bolton's which made losses. The Great Exhibition itself made a substantial profit which was used to finance many educational projects including the Victoria and Albert Museum and other institutions in South Kensington. Some of the local proceeds could have been used towards the costs of future trips. There is evidence from the accounts of the Sunderland and Bolton Committees that surplus funds were transferred to a fund for facilitating visits and exhibits for the Paris Exhibition in 1853.

After the Exhibition had ended some people remained nostalgic about their experiences and the International Club was established near its Hyde Park site, where former visitors and exhibitors could meet.[144] With membership fees of three guineas a year, no working people were likely to join but this nostalgia about happy times in 1851 was just as likely to have prevailed amongst them. There are echoes of this nostalgia for good times spent on holiday in the clubs formed in more recent times by Butlins for former campers and those formed for package holiday company customers which hold reunions. These however, are more commercially oriented, the companies have an interest in maintaining brand loyalty amongst consumers and are looking to future bookings. It seems likely, therefore, that the travel clubs themselves could have continued to function in some form and to arrange further trips for members in subsequent years. The future large nationwide travel agency of Dean and Dawson originated in a Stockport

[144] Handbill advertising the International Club, Hyde Park, London, 1851, Manchester Reference Library, M6/3/10/62.

factory visit arranged for the Paris Exhibition of 1872 and we know that many groups of artisans visited this and earlier exhibitions in Paris in the 1850s and 1860s.[145] These workers may have been inspired by their previous experiences or even those of their parents twenty years earlier. Thomas Cook's firm grew to be a large organisation through the profits and the popularisation of travel the exhibition excursions brought about for large numbers of ordinary people.

The working class's involvement in all aspects of the Exhibition and its preparation showed that the risk of insurrection was over and an era of incorporation, collaboration and reformist politics had commenced. By 1858, Engels could describe with seeming despair, "The English proletariat is becoming more and more bourgeois, so that this most bourgeois of all nations is apparently aiming at the possession of a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat as well as a bourgeoisie. For a nation which exploits the whole world this is of course to a certain extent justifiable".[146] During unsuccessful campaigning later in the year for the 1852 Reform Bill, a demonstration in Leicester on 11 October, the day after the Exhibition closed, chaired by William Biggs, was addressed by a man named Thompson who cited the thousands who had visited the Exhibition in peace and behaved in a responsible manner. At "yesterday's closing ceremony" he said, "there were 107,000 people at the Crystal Palace and not one breach of the peace. This was in a country where there were only 850,000 voters and only 250,000 of those were independent".[147] In total six million people

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[145] See Chapter 2, No Grand Tours

[146] Frederick Engels, 1858 cited by A L Morton in "A People's History of England", London, 1938, p377. See Chapter 1

[147] Leicestershire Mercury, 11 October 1851.

had visited the Exhibition during the summer of 1851,[148] it had attracted more visitors than comprised the entire electorate at the time. There was no justifiable reason why the majority of the people should be excluded from the franchise as these people who had proved themselves to be respectable, sensibly behaved and thrifty, posed no threat to the existing order. London had coped with the unprecedented influx of visitors; the visitors had coped with London, thanks to the innovative and resourceful combination of activities undertaken by organisations of the working class. The success of the operation and pleasure given to those who shared in the events meant that the memory of the trips would be an inspiration for years to come. The arrangements made by workers' travel clubs all show elements of modern inclusive tours such as high load factors through advance booking and bulk purchase of transport and accommodation, the services of a guide, excursion opportunities and the provision of security and a sense of familiarity for travellers. Whether or not inclusive tours and savings clubs for the Great Exhibition had any lasting influence on future organised tours for workers will be discussed in the chapters that follow.

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148 Audrey Short, op cit, p202.

CHAPTER 4

HOLIDAYS WITHOUT PAY

4.1 Introduction

Some of the motives of workers travelling to the Great Exhibition and the organisation and arrangements made to allow them to travel and stay in London in massive numbers were discussed in the previous chapter. These arrangements were to set a number of precedents for the future of working-class travel and holiday making. This did not herald an age of mass tourism, it was to be another century before the majority of working people were able to enjoy a holiday away from home of a week or more, without the financial hardship of losing pay for the time they were away. Even so, increasing numbers of workers managed to secure a holiday for themselves by a variety of means as that century progressed.

The popular image of the seaside holiday evolved during the nineteenth century with the growth of the middle class. It became part of the routine of respectable family life not just in Britain but France and other industrialised nations.[1] According to James Walvin, middle-class families did not like to admit to taking leisurely stays at the seaside. He uses the example of Clare Leighton who, writing of her Edwardian childhood, said that her mother "had profound contempt for people who took holidays. She dismissed them as having something

[1] Anne Martin-Fugier, Bourgeois Rituals, in A History of Private Life IV, From the Fires of Revolution to the Great War, ed Michelle Perrot; Cambridge, Massachusets and London, pp 289-307, 1990

common in their make-up".[2] Lazy holidays were thought to belong to the lower orders. Clare Leighton's family didn't go to Lowestoft to enjoy themselves. They went there so that the children could benefit in their health, and in order that the mother and father could go on working with additional vitality.[3] Time spent at the seaside in comparative idleness had to be justified on health grounds. Many middle-class families spent summer at the seaside while their fathers continued to work. Servants accompanied the women and children, who would be joined later by the father, so the mothers were ensured of relaxation with no worry about domestic chores.[4]

It was only during the twentieth century that the holiday ritual was extended to the working-class majority and it has only become near universal in the years following World War Two. It would, however, be a mistake to believe that the model middle-class holiday has merely filtered down to the masses who have gratefully taken it up in imitation of their social superiors.

4.2 Cultural Continuity, Conceptual Change - The Roots of Working-class Holidaymaking

The roots of working-class holidaymaking can be traced back to the pre-industrial age when there was little division between work and leisure; leisure followed the annual routine of labour, allied with the religious calendar. This was the "festival culture" referred to in

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2 James Walvin, Beside the Seaside, London, 1978, p94

3 Ibid, p94

4 Ibid, p95

Chapter One. It is probably no coincidence that the modern tradition derived from the north west of England, in the textile producing areas of Lancashire, and to a lesser extent the West Riding of Yorkshire.[5] The explanation for this seems to lie in the industrial origins of these cotton and woollen producing districts. These were the industries at the leading edge of industrialisation. Because they were the earliest trades to undergo mechanisation their transformation incorporated many of the older cultural traditions of the recent pre-industrial past, including some paternalistic upper class and religious sanction to community activiities. Every village had its own traditional festivities commemorating the founding of its church or saint to whom the church was dedicated. These were an opportunity for quasi-religious celebrations such as rush-bearing, followed by religious services and afterwards games and sports, dancing and drinking.[6] Popular wakes entertainments were such sports as climbing the greasy pole, eating scalding porridge, smock racing by girls in their underclothes, nude running races by men, chasing the greased pig and bull baiting.[7] On these days the whole village or town would come together, perhaps joined by visitors from neighbouring parishes who would have had different wakes days. Of course, no everyday work was performed on these occasions,

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[5] John K Walton, The Demand for Working-Class Seaside Holidays in Victorian England, Economic History Review, Vol 34, 1981, pp 249-265

[6] Robert Poole, Oldham Wakes, in J K Walton and J Walvin eds, Leisure in Britain 1780-1939, 1983, pp71-98

[7] John K Walton and Robert Poole, The Lancashire Wakes in the Nineteenth Century, in Robert Storch (ed) Popular Culture and Custom in Nineteenth -Century England, Beckenham, 1982, pp100-124, p112; Douglas A Reid, Interpreting the Festival Calendar: Wakes and Fairs as Carnivals, also in Robert Storch, op cit, pp125-153, p129

but women would have had extra work to prepare the home for visitors. The wakes were celebrated as a community and because the mills employed labour within a specific locality or migrants from a particular nearby place, traditional communities and customs, remained intact. Because everyone in the community celebrated at the same time it was not possible for the mill owners to impose a work discipline to suppress the holiday as all the workers, as a collective action, ran off on wakes days.[8]

This seems to disprove Foucault's dichotomy which divides the study of leisure into preindustrial and industrialised societal forms.[9] No clear conceptual break or rupture occurred in the case of the Lancashire Wakes; similar types of celebratory or festive activities were pursued throughout the transition to industrial society, albeit within different cultural contexts. The recognition that these celebrations were assigned different cultural meanings by different participants avoids the trap of anachronism, warned against by Foucault, when discussing continuity of a leisure form from preindustrial society into the industrialised period. Whether or not the history of leisure is discontinuous is ambiguous. Although the activities enjoyed at the wakes and other celebrations before and during industrialisation are similar in form, they took place in different economic and social circumstances and therefore had different significance to participants.[10]

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8 Walton, op cit, p254

9 M Foucault, The Order of Things, trans A Sheridan, London, 1970, pxxii

10 Peter Burke, Viewpoint - The Invention of Leisure in Early Modern Europe, Past and Present, No 146, February 1995, pp136-150, p139

As pressure from the more puritanical elements within the Church of England had the most boisterous entertainments of the wakes and rush-bearing moved from Sunday to Saturday, the festivals became secularised with rowdy processions of decorated rushcarts accompanied by drinking and dancing in local public houses, within many of which the communities' celebrations were actually organised[11] in an early commercialisation of leisure activity. Wakes Sunday became a day for entertainment in the home and Monday for fairs and more public forms of amusement such as bands, games and funfairs.

With secularisation and increased prosperity in the region throughout the century (apart from during the cotton famine), the wakes celebrations became more commercialised and extended to Tuesday and later in the nineteenth century, even to Wednesday. Monday and Tuesday became the days for seaside excursions by rail to the Lancashire coastal resorts such as Blackpool and Southport.[12] Although facilitated by the development of the railways from the 1840s onwards, there was a much older tradition in the western Lancashire towns of sea bathing. Visiting Blackpool in or before 1813, Richard Ayton found that:

> Among the company are crowds of poor people from the manufacturing towns who have a high opinion of the efficacy of bathing, maintaining that in the months of August and September there is physic in the sea.[13]

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11 Poole, op cit, p78

12 James Walvin, Beside the Seaside, London, 1978, p35

13 Richard Ayton, Voyage Around Great Britain, 1813, quoted by Morris Brooke Smith, "The Growth and Development of Popular Entertainment and

This tradition probably had its roots in a long forgotten pagan past, as did other forms of wakes celebration albeit that the meaning had changed within the industrial milieu. In 1838 William Howitt, in his "Rural Life of England", commented on the growing numbers of operatives visiting the Lancashire seaside:

> The better class of operatives in the manufacturing districts consider it as necessary "to go to the salt water" in the summer as to be clothed and fed for the rest of the year. From Preston, Blackburn, Bolton, Oldham and all those spinning and weaving towns, you see them turning out by the whole wagon and cart loads bound for Blackpool and such places.[14]

Whole communities would walk or ride in carts to the sea to indulge en masse in, often naked, bathing,[15] outraging the sense of decency of their more respectable middle-class fellow tourists who moved away to a safe distance in more remote, select resorts[16] or separated themselves in time, more genteel visitors preferring to go to Blackpool in October after the wakes season had ended.

Pastimes in the Lancashire Cotton Towns, 1830-1870, M.Litt Dissertation, University of Lancaster, 1970, p130

14 William Howitt, The Rural Life of England, quoted by Morris Brooke Smith, op cit, p132

15 Harold Perkin, The Social Tone of Victorian Seaside Resort, The Structured Crowd, Sussex, 1981, pp70-85, p73

16 Perkin, op cit, p74

4.3 Going Off Clubs - Saving for the Holidays

The wakes became more commercialised and lengthened, eventually, by the end of the nineteenth century, to a full week in some places. Bolton's annual August holiday developed in the 1860s out of the trips run by the operative cotton spinners' association.[17] It therefore became imperative that workers (mostly in cotton mills) had the financial means to enjoy themselves. The seemingly frivolous extravagance of wakes week and the sacrifice of a week's wages was only achieved by thrift during the rest of the year. Wakes Savings or Going Off Clubs became widespread in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the first of which discovered so far began at the Werneth Spindle Works in 1871 or earlier.[18] As the wakes extended generally towards a full week (Werneth Spindle Works had a week by 1872)[19] and seaside stays, as opposed to just day trips, became more common, these clubs proliferated. They were organised in factories, clubs, workshops, schools, pubs, political groups and streets, following closely in structure and organisation, clubs formed for the Great Exhibition.[20] Evidence that the influence of trips to visit the exhibition was still felt, at least eight years later, in 1859 is provided by the Inspectors of Factories' report of that year which, referring in particular to free time and

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17 John K Walton, The English Seaside Resort - A Social History 1750-1914, Leicester, 1983, p28

18 Stephen G Jones, The Lancashire Wakes, Holiday Savings and Holiday Pay in the Textile Districts, Eccles and District Local History Society, 1983, pp27-39, p30; Poole, op cit, p88

19 Stephen G Jones, "Lancashire Wakes…", op cit p29: Poole, op cit, p88

20 See Chapter 3

the consequent opportunities for self-improvement it realised for working men, stated that

> It was by this indeed, that they were enabled to realise the Exhibition of 1851 as a fact which they have never forgotten, and never will; for it lighted up a flame of observation in the minds of many, which has never dwindled; and it stirred up a spirit of inquiry, which has been of lasting benefit to the people as well as to the country at large.[21]

The official report points out that the Great Exhibition was still a source of inspiration to working people at the beginning of the next decade, but whether or not the more recent wakes savings clubs were direct descendants of the exhibition clubs is not conclusively proved though they were certainly very similar in form. From the minutes and accounts of Sunderland's Local Committee for the Great Exhibition, it can be seen that surplus funds were set aside towards trips to the Paris Exhibition, to be held a few years later.[22] It is possible that saving for the wakes or rush-bearing predates the Great Exhibition although no evidence of specific savings clubs exists from this earlier time. Describing the Middleton Rush-bearing of 1819 in his autobiography, Samuel Bamford, the former radical and dialect writer of descriptions of Lancashire life, wrote:

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21 Report of HM Inspectors' of Factories, 1859

22 Sunderland Local Committee for the Great Exhibition, 1850-1851, Tyne and Wear Archives, ref 745/1

> Then lads and lasses would at all spare hours be engaged in some preparation for the feast. New clothes would be ordered and their quantity or quality would probably depend on the amount of money saved during the year, or on work performed during a certain time before the wakes.[23]

Bamford referred to both saving and working extra hard in the preceding period to secure enough money to finance the "holiday", showing that, in 1819, saving was not universal for the wakes. It has even been proposed that the origins of the wakes savings clubs lie in the "Shaking Clubs" of the 1830s.[24] These shaking clubs seem to have been a forerunner of modern lotteries; people paid in a weekly amount in the hope that they might win a payout decided on the shake of dice. In the Going Off Club at Werneth employees saved for fifty weeks at sixpence a share for a twenty-five shilling per share payout just before the wakes. The amount paid out by such clubs in Oldham rose from £1,000 in 1871 to £10,000 in 1877, £60,000 in 1884 and £175,000 in 1900.[25] A Lancashire cotton worker remembered saving sixpence a week in his youth, during the 1880s, increasing to two shillings a week when he became an adult.[26] The number and importance of the smaller clubs grew relative to the large ones run by mills and other institutions. This was partly because of strikes in

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23 Samuel Bamford, Early Days, 1848, Cass. 1967, Chapter XV

24 Poole, op cit, p88, Jones, "Lancashire Wakes…", op cit, p30

25 Poole, op cit, p88

26 G C Martin, Working-class Holidaymaking Down to 1947, MA Thesis, University of Leicester, 1968, p44. From Parliamentary Debates, 5th Series, Vol 338, Col 1570

the engineering industry in 1885 and 1897 which set workers against saving with their employers.[27]

These clubs were not confined to the Victorian era; wakes clubs were still necessary until holidays with pay became general in the 1940s and 1950s. Although by the 1930s there were payouts to individuals of twenty-five to thirty pounds, this was not spent entirely on frivolity.[28] While the mills were closed people were not earning but rent and bills still had to be paid and families fed. A proportion would also have been spent on new clothes and household items, many of which traditionally had been purchased at the wakes fairs.[29] Luxury foods were purchased too, for entertaining visitors. The cost of the visit to the fair and drinking during and afterwards also came out of this sum. From later in the nineteenth century onwards the payout was used to pay for a seaside holiday as well as new clothing to wear whilst away.[30] The savings clubs enabled workers who received no paid holidays to enjoy a week off with little financial hardship by spreading the cost throughout the year.

These holiday clubs were not merely confined to the northern cotton and woollen producing areas. The chemical company, Brunner-Mond in Northwich, Cheshire, had a

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27 Poole, op cit, p88

28 Ashton-under-Lyne Reporter, 20 August 1932,p8, Minutes of Evidence Before the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, 1938

29 Poole, op cit, p89; Stephen G Jones, The British Labour Movement and Working Class Leisure 1918-1939, Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Manchester, 1983, pp148-149

30 Minutes of Evidence before the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, 1938

savings club that in January 1881 had twenty-six pounds in credit.[31] This was three years before the firm introduced a week's paid annual leave for good attenders, illustrating that workers were already taking holidays when the employer introduced paid ones. Bourneville works had a holiday savings club by the early twentieth century and Lever Brothers at Port Sunlight began a scheme on 1 January 1905.[32] In 1908, at Lever Brothers, 1,335 men and 935 women drew out savings and took holidays in such places as the Isle of Man, Blackpool, North and South Wales and even the continent.[33] The vicar of St Pauls in Finsbury, Rev Smith, claimed that in the 1880s, his penny bank depositors withdrew money to pay for excursions.[34] In Leicester in 1935 most big firms had holiday funds[35] and in August of that year £50,000 was paid out by thrift clubs to savers in Hinckley,[36] also in Leicestershire. How long these savings schemes had been established and whether they were contemporaneous with the northern schemes is uncertain but during the late 1920s and 1930s, Blackpool's representatives of holiday business had tried to market such schemes in other parts of the country in order to widen their market and catchment area. There is no mention of any such clubs in Leicestershire in Bank Holiday reports in the main local newspaper in 1919 or even as late as 1925 when record numbers of holidaymakers

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31 G C Martin, op cit, p45

32 Progress, Lever Brothers, February 1905, quoted by G C Martin, op cit, p45

33 Progress, Lever Brothers, April, 1909, quoted by G C Martin, op cit, p46

34 G C Martin, op cit, p44

35 Leicester Mercury, 2 August, 1935

36 Leicester Mercury, 3 August, 1935

left the city for the seaside.[37] The earliest mention of Leicestershire clubs was in 1930, when in Hinckley voluntary savings clubs in factories made holidays possible for many workers. One firm paid out £5,300 to workers in three factories in the town.[38] A former hosiery worker of Stoke Golding near Hinckley, recalled saving two shillings and sixpence weekly during the working year, which gave her a holiday payout of six pounds.[39] She had her first holiday away from home in 1937. She recalls that only about one family in her village ever went on holiday when she was a child in the years before 1920, which seems to indicate that the hosiery workers did not have savings schemes at that time. Some hosiery workers called the savings initiatives the "Didlum Club".[40] What the Leicestershire and Lancashire savings schemes do have in common, is that both areas had as their major employment branches of the textile industry, Leicestershire being a centre for the hosiery trade; a high level of female employment was also a common characteristic of these areas, providing relatively high family incomes.

Mander Brothers, the Wolverhampton based varnish and paint makers, had a holiday savings club, which before the Holidays with Pay Act was administered by the firm's

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37 Leicester Mercury, 2 August, 1919 and 1 August, 1925

38 Leicester Mercury, 2 August, 1930

39 Reminiscence of Nellie Skelton, Oral History Interview Cassette Recording made by Rhianydd Murray, Arqueotex Textile Heritage Project, North Warwickshire and Hinckley College, 6 June 1998, Hinckley College Library

40 Su Barton and Rhianydd Murray, Twisted Yarns - the Story of the Hosiery Industry in Hinckley, North Warwickshire and Hinckley College, 1999, p72

Welfare Club. Authorised collectors in each department took in payments each week and entered the amount on a card. The money was paid weekly into the Trustee Savings Bank and interest of five per cent every six months was allowed.[41] Subscriptions of four pence for adults and two pence for under eighteens had to be paid to join the Welfare Club. Although a company sponsored organisation, the Club was run by elected members from the work force. It also offered a Christmas Savings Fund and sports and social activities, open to both sexes.[42] From the statistics showing that 935 of those saving at Lever Brothers were female,[43] about two fifths of the total number of savers, it can also be seen that a substantial quantity of women worked and saved there too.

4.4 Collective Enforcement of the Holiday

The full week away from the mill was common in practice long before it was officially sanctioned by the employers because of the collective action of the workers "running off" at the same time.[44] The extra days seem to have been gained during depression years when trade was not very good and held on to through collective action in good years. This is because in a depression it is to the employers advantage to limit production.[45] It is also to the employers' advantage to have a week's closure rather

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41 G le MM, The History of Mander Brothers, 1773 -1953, London, 1953, p250

42 Ibid, p249

43 G C Martin, op cit, p44

44 Poole, op cit, pp 90-92

45 Poole, op cit, p89

than continued disruption caused by lots of odd days off here and there. Gradually the mill owners standardised the customary holidays by giving several consecutive days off in the summer. Many textile towns had regular week long breaks popularly known as wakes by the end of the nineteenth century.[46] Darwen and Oldham had each acquired a full week by 1889, soon to be followed by Chorley, Nelson, Burnley and Blackburn.[47]

The cotton employers and unions reached an agreement in 1906, giving an annual holiday equivalent to a hundred and sixteen and a half days. Another agreement in 1914 increased the holidays to a hundred and thirty-six and a half days per year. This meant that as well as three days at Easter, three at Whitsun, a Saturday in July, Christmas and Boxing Day, the cotton operative now had wakes Saturday plus the whole of the following week off.[48] Although less usual and outside the collective agreement, a fortnight's shutdown was becoming increasingly common, especially in limited liability companies, between 1890 and 1910.[49] Although no provision for payment during the break was made, these arrangements meant that textile workers had the time to take a prolonged stay of a week at the seaside. Because the different towns, villages and localities had their wakes during different weeks during the summer, it enabled the resorts and travelling fairmen to have a full season of employment between Whitsun and

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46 S Jones, "The Lancashire Wakes…" op cit, p29

47 S Jones, "The Lancashire Wakes…", op cit, p29

48 Edwin Hopwood, "A History of the Lancashire Cotton Industry and the Amalgamated Weavers' Association", Manchester, 1969, p125

49 Jones, "Lancashire Wakes", op cit, p28

September.[50] These "low-brow" activities and entertainments follow a cultural tradition evident in descriptions of the wakes.

The growth in popularity of the seaside holiday during wakes weeks did not lead to the end of the traditional working class wakes activities, they were merely relocated to the coastal resorts where bands, funfairs, donkey riding and rustic type games abounded. Socialising within the community could still take place in Blackpool or some other resort if nearly the whole community had transferred itself there at the same time.[51] It also meant that travelling showmen and women and entertainers no longer needed to be constantly on the road as now holiday revellers came to them and not the other way round. This relocation of amusements popular with the working class has continued into the present where media claims that overseas package holidays have killed off the traditional English holiday[52] could be refuted by using the bawdy entertainment, silly games and bingo in hotels, funfairs, pony (or even camel) riding, loud music and the raucousness and drunkenness of parties and barbecues as evidence.

In the north west of England the typical working-class holiday evolved from older preindustrial traditions, nurtured by the particular productive relationships, such as the communal nature of factory work and mill town life,

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50 Walton, op cit, p256

51 Poole, op cit, p92

52 Philip Wren, "Holiday Shanties in Britain: A History and Analysis", A dissertation prepared for Hull School of Architecture, November 1981, p15: J Christopher Holloway, The Business of Tourism, London, 1989, p182

prevailing in that region. This pattern of holiday development formed the prototype for working class holidaymakers in the rest of the country where the week away at the seaside for large groups of workers was slower to make its appearance.

4.5 Why Were Wakes Holidays Confined to the North West of England?

Why had the holiday habit, which was engrained amongst the north western working class by the beginning of the twentieth century, not become so elsewhere?. After all, every part of Britain had its traditional festivals and feast days and every region was affected by the changes in production wrought by industrialisation. John K Walton[53] offers a hypothesis, confirmation of which he believes provides this explanation. For a working-class presence at the seaside to develop beyond the day trip, he proposes, five conditions had to have been met, the first being that industrial population centres had to have cheap and rapid access to the coastline. This was because the working-class holidaymaker had limited time as well as a limited amount of money to spend. However, from the 1850s all industrial areas were served by the railway network which extended into the coastal areas. This then cannot explain why not all communities made use of it for anything other than excursions.

The second of Walton's conditions is that a significant proportion of the working-class population needed a

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53 John K Walton, The Demand for Working-class Seaside Holidays in Victorian England, Economic History Review, Vol 34, 1981, pp249-265

sufficient income to enable a surplus to be allocated to the pursuit of health and pleasure. This income needed to be regular if savings were to be accumulated throughout the year. The textile trade, although it did not offer especially high individual male earnings, could provide a relatively high family income as women were employed in jobs well paid in comparison with other common forms of female labour. Teenagers and young people could also earn quite good wages to contribute to the overall family budget. It also meant that many young people had the financial independence to take holidays without the rest of the family. Of course there would be certain times in life when savings for holidays could not easily be made, such as when a family had very young children while there were no older ones to contribute to the budget or in old age when employment ceased. The cotton and woollen mills were also able to offer security of employment for most of the period as employers preferred short-time working or wage cuts to laying-off workers.[54] From the 1870s, average real wages in the textile districts rose, providing a surplus above normal budgeting needs that could be spared for savings.[55]

The third condition was that the worker needed several consecutive days' holiday in the summer with the toleration or approval of the employer. The textile workers were able to secure this time through their collectivity, as argued above, when they "ran away" en

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54 At Ashton-under-Lyne in 1932 employers and unions made a compromise agreement to cut wages by 15% when trade was bad during the depression, in an effort to avoid further unemployment in the area where 3,000 were already out of work. Ashton-under-Lyne Reporter, 20 August 1932, p8

55 Stephen Jones, "The Lancashire Wakes…" , op cit, p30

masse from the mills on wakes days. It could also be argued that independent craftsmen in workshops could have achieved this through their relative independence but it was the textile workers who did so, thereby facilitating stays away from home extending beyond the day trip or the weekend.

In Lancashire, especially in the Oldham area where the wakes habit was most strongly adhered to and which had the largest number of savings clubs, there was a very early development of working-class consciousness as opposed to trade union consciousness. John Foster argues that this consciousness was based on a highly developed sense of community and social cohesion. Alex Callinicos, with reference to Anthony Giddens, describes these aspects of class consciousness as the difference between "individual agents with a class identity based on a recognition of shared class membership and collective agents, who co-ordinate their actions to effect change, in opposition to other classes".[56] Oldham also had a history of radical politics and support for Chartism led, up to the 1830s, by weavers and later in the 1830s to the 1850s by spinners.[57] Foster's comparative study shows that in the other areas he examined, Northampton and Shields, only a trade union consciousness had evolved by the 1850s. Oldham's strong and well organised working-class movement was destroyed following defeats by the employers after 1850. However, this would still leave a group of workers with experience of organising independently and of collecting money in the past for strike and hardship funds

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56 Alex Callinicos, "Making History", Cambridge, 1987, pp134-135

57 John Foster, "Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution: Early Industrial Capitalism in Three English Towns", London, 1977, pp 125 -49

so it is likely that these people used their skills to other more immediate ends, such as organising savings clubs for visits to the Great Exhibition in 1851 and later for wakes weeks. From records relating to the Exhibition, a number of former Chartist activists have been identified in workers' committees in Leicester and in Glasgow.[58] The attitude towards time-off may be, as in the case of Oldham workers, a good indicator of early collective organisation. The consciousness and structures for collective action to enforce the holiday would also have been present.

The fourth factor was the conditions in the resorts themselves which needed to be able to offer sufficient and appropriate facilities to cope with working-class demand. In Lancashire, Blackpool and Southport, formerly middle-class frequented resorts, were able to offer and develop facilities for working-class visitors early compared to other parts of the country, stimulated by the local demand. But despite the presence of all these conditions, Walton does point out what is probably the decisive factor in determining whether or not, for at least one week in the year, working people became holidaymakers. That factor is that working-class people were able to exercise free choice over how they spent their free time and disposable income when there was competition for it not just from holidays but other things such as local entertainment and other leisure activities throughout the year, new clothes, furniture or a bigger and better home. This exercising of consumer preference reinforces one of the primary suppositions, which is that working people were not passive consumers in a market place dominated by

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58 See Chapter Three, pp 153 and 159

a few entrepreneurial individuals like Thomas Cook, anxious to imitate the classes above them in their holiday habits, and who were granted free time and holidays from work by benevolent employers. They were instrumental in obtaining and in determining their own use of leisure. Consumerism as the convergence of economics and culture was recognised by Georg Lukacs in 1922.[59] Thomas Richards goes further in this analysis, by linking consumerism and commodities as the co-ordinating frame within which different forms of social life were grouped.[60] These forms include not just economics and culture but represent a fusion of economic, political, cultural, psychological and literary influences.

In addition to the five conditions necessary for working-class holidaymaking to become common, Walton further identifies four main patterns of holiday observance other than that of the textile areas. The first is the case of well-paid craftsmen in workshops where labour discipline was loosely enforced who might have been able to enjoy seaside visits as part of a persisting pattern of casual holidays throughout the year.[61] These artisans could easily have met the conditions described above, being able to earn enough to make regular savings and being in a position to take time off should they have desired to do so. Many of them did, for example craftsmen in Sheffield contributing to the development of resorts like Scarborough, Bridlington and Cleethorpes. These steel and cutlery workers almost matched the demand for holidays

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59 Lukacs reference from Thomas Richards, "The Commodity Culture of Victorian England", New York, 1990, p14

60 Thomas Richards, op cit, p14

61 Walton, op cit, p258

amongst the Lancashire textile workers. However, where it differed was that although pay was good in these craft based occupations, attendance was irregular and labour discipline undeveloped. High living standards, including taking time off, were achieved by short bursts of hard work rather than by regular and disciplined habits of labour.[62] In the light trades of Sheffield, the Midlands and elsewhere in the country, workshops of independent artisans survived the coming of large scale factory labour brought about through industrialisation. Old traditions and patterns of leisure survived with them, such as a high level of absenteeism, taking time off when it suited the worker, and the extended weekend through observance of St Monday.[63] An eighteenth century ballad illustrates the Sheffield cutlers' cultural attachment to this lifestyle:

> Brother workmen, cease your labour,
> Lay your files and hammers by;
> Listen while a brother neighbour
> Sings a cutler's destiny:
> How upon a good St Monday,
> Sitting by the smithy fire,
> We tell what's been done o't Sunday,
> And in cheerful mirth conspire.[64]

Most of the cutlers worked in establishments of up to five men or even in virtual isolation in domestic workshops. According to factory inspectors' reports there were 15,970

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62 Walton, op cit, p259

63 Ibid, Douglas Reid, The Decline of St Monday 1766-1876, Past and Present, No 71, 1976, pp76-101

64 G I H Lloyd, "The Cutlery Trades, An Historical Essay in the Economics of Small-scale Production", London, 1913, p181

cutlery workers in 1901,[65] making Monday important not just for leisure but for socialising. From Douglas Reid's study of 1840's Birmingham, where most industries were also workshop or small factory based, employing skilled craftsmen and artisans, it can be seen that excursions of several days duration were taking place at that time.[66] Monday was the most popular day for leisure activities of all kinds.

The Sheffield Cutlers had a legacy of periods of time off work, dating back at least to the sixteenth century. The earliest surviving ordinances of the trade are dated 24 June 1565 and refer to "the ancient customs and ordinances" thereof, implying continuity with an older set of trade rules that has not survived. These ordinances provided for two annual holidays or cessations of work, a fortnight in summer from 15 August and four weeks in winter from Christmas Day.[67] There may have been practical reasons for this, the grinders relied on water power, which was particularly unreliable in the drought of summer and during winter frosts.[68] However, the ordinances' wording purports that the closure was "for the better relief and commodytie of the poorer sorte"(sic).[69] The enforcement of compulsory holidays may be attributed in part to the desire of those "poor craftsmen for a

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65 Lloyd, op cit, p182

66 Douglas Reid, "The 'Iron Roads' and 'the Happiness of the Working Classes' - the Early Development of the Railway Excursion", The Journal of Transport History, Third Series, Vol 17, No 1, March 1996, pp57-73, p61

67 Lloyd, op cit, p110

68 Ibid, p111

69 Ibid

period of leisure and recreation, a break from their arduous life".[70] This view gains some credibility from the voluntary adoption, in 1680, by the scissor-smiths, also centred in Sheffield, of three annual holidays of one week each at Easter, Whitsuntide and Christmas in order to "check the physical disablement and bad workmanship resulting from excessive labour".[71]

The assumption of the right to an extended break from work was also influential on other Sheffield industries. At the Sheffield Smelting Company, which employed "men of good character" from the owners' place of worship, the Zion Chapel, unofficial holidays were taken. In 1824 the directors wrote in a letter to their London agent, "next Monday being Whitmonday is a considerable holiday on account of the Sunday School Union celebrating its anniversary and as several of our people are concerned in it we are not at present sure whether we can attend to your samples on that day".[72] These periodic breaks were not confined to Sheffield trades. Weavers in London stopped work for five weeks after Christmas, again reputedly for the sake of the workers' health and well-being.[73]

In the Sheffield light trades most men preferred not to work on Mondays and Tuesdays, making up their hours at the

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70 Ibid

71 Leader, "History of the Cutler's Company" undated p63, quoted by Lloyd, p111

72 Ronald E Wilson, "Two Hundred Precious Metal Years, a History of the Sheffield Smelting Company 1760-1960", London, 1960, p75

73 Lloyd, op cit, p111

end of the week.[74] A culture of irregularity of working habits prevailed in the city into the twentieth century, according to a writer in 1913, who argued "the custom of doing little work early in the week and making up time by working long hours at the latter end of the week, which is still characteristic of the out-workers among the journeymen, became firmly established at an early date".[75] At times when wages were particularly high, hours were short, workmen preferring leisure to income after reaching their normal earnings. This was not a trait peculiar to Sheffield artisans and numerous other examples of this preference are common.[76]

In the large Sheffield factories with steam power, the worker did not have the same level of control over working hours as the wheels were powered from 8.00 am to 5.00 pm at the beginning of the week, extending to 7.00 pm by Friday and on Saturday from 7.00 am to 4.30 pm. This came to 58 and a half hours in total but reflecting the trend in the workshops, few grinders put in the full hours during the first two days of the week.[77] In 1850, in these light trades, the common holidays taken included ten or fourteen days after Christmas, one day each for Easter and Whitsun and a half day on Shrove Tuesday and on the Fifth of November. A children's rhyme dating at least from the Victorian period shows the importance of community tradition and collectivity in enforcing holidays

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74 Sidney Pollard, "History of the Labour Movement in Sheffield", Liverpool University Press, 1957, p61

75 Lloyd, op cit, p180

76 Match factory workers, piano workers described by Booth in Life and Labour of London Poor, 1902

77 Pollard, op cit, p61

in another area of predominantly light trades, Leicestershire. Referring to Shrove Tuesday, the verse went:

> Pancake Day! Pancake Day!
> If you won't give us an 'oliday
> We'll all run away![78]

The Christmas holiday which was used for stocktaking was preceded by a few weeks of hectic work known as "calf", "cow" and "bull" weeks, to accumulate wages to last into the new year.[79] This demonstrates that workers in these trades were able to take time off if they chose but do not seem to have been particularly interested in breaks during the summer, at least not as early as 1850. The relative independence of this section of the workforce persisted and in 1906 working hours were fixed only in the large works. The number of days off ranged from six to sixteen per year with an average of 14.8 days.[80] The working day was still shorter on Mondays and Tuesdays than later in the week and St Monday and even Holy Tuesday were still popular. "It is now Wednesday and five men in one department have not turned in yet" complained one manufacturer in 1907. This was so prevalent although not officially sanctioned that another manufacturer claimed that he "lay awake at night devising ways of circumventing them and getting them to work".[81]

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[78] Rhyme recited in reminiscence by Fred Dunkley of South Wigston, Leicestershire, born 1906

[79] Pollard, op cit, p62, Lloyd, op cit, p181

[80] Ibid, pp61-62

[81] Ibid, p211

Closely related to this first group, in organisation but not in terms of income, were those employed in the less-prosperous kind of factory or workshop. Again, in these labour discipline was lax and traditional communal holidays observed which diverted free time and expenditure away from the seaside holiday habit. In the Potteries and Birmingham areas, St Monday continued to be venerated until the 1864 Factory Act extension, which widened the scope of legislation on working hours beyond the large cotton factories,[82] made it unattractive to lose pay on a Monday when the limitations on the hours of young worker assistants meant that wages could no longer be made up at the end of the week.[83] The wakes of the various towns in the region, held during different weeks throughout the summer and attracting celebrators from neighbouring towns as well as local residents, continued to bring disruption through the 1870s and were subject to numerous campaigns to consolidate them until the end of the century. The financial effect of these frequent breaks from labour meant that workers in these districts could not save up for holidays by the sea. Home and community based entertainment and local excursions were the order of the day for all but a thrifty minority.[84] Savings clubs had no attraction for this group of workers and no disposable income, if a person managed to attain one, could be accumulated as it was spent on other forms of leisure. The Potteries and Black Country exemplified this pattern and when a thrift club among Stoke fitters in 1900 was reported upon, it was treated as an unusual event as such

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82 Reid, "The Decline of St Monday", op cit, p101

83 Ibid

84 Walton, op cit, p261

clubs were not common in the West Midlands until after the First World War.[85]

Still following this pattern of employment, for the framework knitters, concentrated in Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire, work throughout the nineteenth century was subject to seasonal fluctuations of demand for their products. Before the application of steam power and factory production, in the latter part of the century, work was both ill paid and sporadic. Even so, the 1844 report of evidence given to the Hosiery Commission Enquiry into the problems of the framework knitters giving examples of working conditions in the trade, shows that some provision was made available for holidays. In Leicester, for framework knitters in four of the best paid workshops, the total combined earnings of about 126 workmen in the week before Easter were £119 16s 4d (about 19 shillings each) and during Easter Week itself £23 12s 8d.[86] On average they earned about fifteen shillings and eleven pence halfpenny a week each which works out at a combined total of £100 10s 4d in a normal average week. These figures show that the knitters as a group increased their wages during the week before the Easter week and did not put in many hours during the week itself, presumably taking a "holiday" which may not have been by choice if the workshops were closed. The report goes on to say that these earnings were averaged out over a period of a few

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85 Ibid

86 W Felkin, "An Account of the machine-wrought Hosiery Trade: Its Extent and the Condition of the Framework Knitters"; being a paper read at the statistical section, at the second York meeting of the British Association, held September 18th 1844, together with Evidence Given Under the Hosiery Commission Inquiry, London 1845, pp 19 and 20

months during which one extraordinary workman varied his earnings from eight shillings and ninepence to thirty-eight shillings and fourpence in different weeks. During frequent lay-offs parochial relief was obtained. Even in the best paid areas of framework knitting no savings were available to be put by for old age or slack trade let alone a holiday away from home.[87] As in the Potteries, savings clubs for holidays were not in evidence before the 1930s.[88]

The third pattern of taking time off work, Walton argued, was found in the areas of heavy industry and mining which offered fewer opportunities for the family budget to be enhanced through the contributions of working wives and children, although women who worked in the home could contribute to household income through taking in washing, lodgers and cleaning jobs.[89] These areas again saw widespread observance of St Monday and traditional local celebrations and again offered little encouragement for extended seaside visits.[90] Workers in these areas did not develop a habit of saving up for their holidays but when one was approaching, worked especially hard to increase output, according to which their pay was calculated, in order to earn enough extra to cover their additional expenses. The week before the break was again known as a

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87 Felkin, ibid

88 Leicester Mercury, 2 and 3 August 1935

89 Andrew Walker, "Pleasurable Homes? Victorian Model Miners' Wives and the Family Wage in a 19th Century South Yorkshire Colliery District", Women's History Review, Vol 6, No 3, 1997, pp 317-336, p323

90 Walton, op cit, p258

"bull-week".[91] Holidays away from home though were not commonplace although a few South Wales and Tyneside resorts were attracting day trippers in the late nineteenth century, as were Weston-Super-Mare and Ilfracombe for South Wales steamer excursions patronised by colliers and their families. However, the demand for seaside holidays by working-class visitors in these areas remained limited even by 1900.[92]

Lastly, Walton points out, wide areas of southern and midland England had lost their traditional holidays by the mid-nineteenth century. In his reminiscences, published in 1868, Thomas Wright, a journeyman engineer, wrote, describing the London area:

> In some districts there are occassional holidays in connection with local customs. These, however, are but partial and accidental holidays, and the holidays proper of the unwashed are the three great festivals of Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide. Of these, Easter, viewed purely as a holiday is the greatest. Christmas is devoted more especially to the renewing of home associations and the promotion of social intercourse; and Whitsuntide coming some weeks after the "outing" season has fairly set in, the holiday zest that comes in with the spring is by that time somewhat toned down.[93]

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91 John Benson, "British Coalminers in the Nineteenth Century", Dublin 1980, pp56 and 57

92 Walton, op cit, p262

93 Thomas Wright (The Journeyman Engineer), "The Great Unwashed", 1868, London, 1970 edition, p235

Wright made no mention of holidays taken during the summer and went on to say that, in his experience, it was difficult for workers to put anything by for enjoyment at Whitsun, coming so soon as it did after Easter. The relatively long period of time between Christmas and Easter and the lack of other celebrations and opportunities for outings in the duration allowed any surplus funds to be saved for a holiday at Easter but at no other time.[94]

Evidence that before the middle of the nineteenth century industrial workers from Birmingham and the surrounding towns took holidays, even away from home, is provided by a description of the Cotswold Games. These were an annual event until the enclosure of the open fields surrounding Dover Hill where they were held. Writing in 1904, C R Ashbee in the "Last Records of a Cotswold Community" relates how industrial workers from the Midlands would gather for the traditional festivities.

> On the whole, the folk of Campden and the Wolds were wise in keeping the Industrial Revolution at arms length. They must have seen it at its worst. To have the scum and refuse of the nearest great factory towns shot annually into Campden for a week's camping on Dover's Hill, two or three thousand at a time, with unlimited beer from unlimited booths and hooligans of the type of Tantiatopee; to have Kingcomb Lane a whistling pandemonium of roughs and the pleasant

94 Ibid, p236

valleys of Saintbury and Weston tramped by armed bands of Birmingham yahoos was not a thing to be desired.[95]

In the Coventry ribbon-trade too, traditional holidays persisted well after the nineteenth century's mid-point. William Andrews recorded in his diary for Friday 20 June 1862, "Coventry Fair begins today". The next day, 21 June, he noted "King Fields (Cash's silk-weaving factory) is to be closed all next week". On the following Monday, 23 June, there was a Godiva procession through the town.[96] Although the Godiva Procession was mentioned in previous years' diary entries, 1862 was the only time a full week's cessation of work was mentioned. In this year the ribbon industry was beginning to experience a slump in the trade, prior to its eventual decline, which was blamed on imports from the continent, the Lyon and Basle areas.[97] The reality behind the week's closure was likely to be a lay-off of workers to avoid overproduction rather than specifically for the operatives' enjoyment.

4.6 Towards Nationally Observed Holidays - The Saturday Half-holiday, Bank Holidays and Legislation

For large numbers in the southern and midland areas of England, work was ill-paid and irregular and until the Bank Holidays Act introducing the August Bank Holiday in

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95 C R Ashbee, "The Last Records of a Cotswold Community", quoted by Bob Bushaway, "By Rite, Custom, Ceremony and Community in England, 1700-1880, London, 1982, p246

96 The Diary of William Andrews, op cit, pp57-58

97 Ibid, p56

1871, there was no scope to develop and obtain an extended summer holiday. Even this was initially slow to catch on and in its first year passed by mainly unobserved.[98] However from the second year following its inception, the August Bank Holiday provided the opportunity for millions of workers, in the South-East and Midlands especially, to enjoy an extended weekend incorporating a seaside excursion.

As important as technological innovation in the field of transport in facilitating working-class holidaymaking, especially for the majority not living in the north-west England textile areas, was the passing of the Bank Holiday Act in 1870 and, before that, the generalisation of the Saturday Half Holiday. The granting of these holidays was done for ostensibly improving reasons rather than to allow workers to enjoy themselves in increased leisure time. In favour of the earlier payment of wages and ending work at lunch time on Saturdays, it was claimed the half holiday would:

> Throw into the recreations of our working classes a number of the best and noblest of the working men; men who will not run into diversions upon the Lord's day, and, therefore, leave the diversions of the people who do take upon that day without the tone and elevation and moral influence which the best of their own class would give if they were in the midst of them; but give them the working day, give them the Saturday, and then you will find that your most intelligent, your most religious, your most valuable working men will take their proper standing, and exercise their power of

98 J R R Pimlott, "The Englishman's Holiday", London, 1947 p148

> influence upon the indoor and outdoor recreations which are resorted to by their fellow workmen.[99]

The gist of this argument was that without the Saturday half day, the only people who could take part in leisure and recreational activities were those who did not observe the Sabbath. Consequently, the more respectable workers were excluded, leaving those less so without their moral influence and good example in their pursuits. Other advantages of a half-day on Saturdays, which would become the instigation of the modern week-end, was the belief that it would:

> be a powerful opponent of Saint Monday, which is a shiftless idler and a miserable demoraliser. Where the half-holiday already existed in 1856, piece workers did not lose out in wages but were able to find the means to subscribe to boat clubs, cricket clubs, musical unions and societies by which they recruit and refresh their minds and bodies, and enabled to do more real work than if those hours were spent in drudgery or in pure idleness.[100]

The Saturday half day had reached Sheffield by about 1840 but was not fully established there until about twenty years later.[101] The Jarrow Chemical Company Limited acquired the Friars Goose Chemical Works in Gateshead in 1858 and became the first firm in the area to grant free

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99 Rev William Arthur MA, Saturday Half Holidays and the Earlier Payment of Wages, Speeches delivered at the Exeter Hall Meeting, April 24, 1856, p24

100 Andrew Spottiswoode, ibid, p26

101 Lloyd, op cit, p181

Saturday afternoons.[102] At its peak the company was a major employer in the district, with 1400 men.

The idea of nationally observed holidays was not new to Lubbock's Bank Holiday Bill. In 1856 in addition to the Saturday half-holiday, a committee of gentlemen which included the Earl of Shaftesbury, who was also active in the Early Closing Association campaigning for shorter working hours for shop assistants, advocated the sanction of four national holidays in the year, a bill for which was being prepared in Parliament.[103] This proposal took until 1868 to be the subject of a Parliamentary Select Committee reporting on the Bank Holiday's Bill. This legislation, which came into force in 1870, had the seemingly innocuous aim of recommending that bills falling due on any Special Holiday should not be payable until the day after, which would give bank clerks a day off on those days. The Bank Holidays Act, sponsored by Sir John Lubbock, introduced 26 December as a Bank Holiday and as well as the traditional religious "holydays" at Easter, Whitsuntide and Christmas, an additional, completely secular, day was also introduced on the first Monday of August. This was not at all unanimously supported. Many giving evidence to the Select Committee thought that further holidays for bank workers were not required and that clerks had any grievance on the score of holidays or hours of labour was strongly denied. It was the rule in the bank of Mr McKewan, a witness before the Select

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102 Archives of the British Chemical Industry 1750-1914, A Hand List, Peter J T Morris, Colin A Russell and John Graham Smith(ed), British Society for the History of Science, Monograph 6, Farringdon, 1988, p114

103 George Hitchcock, Saturday Half Holidays and Earlier Payment of Wages, op cit, p31

Committee on Bank Holidays, "that all clerks were entitled to at least a fortnight's holiday".[104] Another testified, "It was the right of every clerk in the London and Westminster Bank to a fortnight's holiday, whilst after twenty years' service the clerks were entitled to three weeks; holidays were also given in individual cases under special circumstances".[105] The debate focussed around the claim that bank closures would lead to commercial damage and increased work on the days following a holiday would cancel out any benefits to the bank workers.[106] Of those in favour of the bill, some thought a Wednesday in June or July would be the most suitable time for the additional holiday.[107] The report only discusses the effect of closures on banking. Nowhere is a general holiday recommended. This seems to have passed into statute almost unnoticed as a consequence of the Act's provision that no-one should be compelled to do on a Bank Holiday what would not be expected of them on Christmas Day or Good Friday.

The new holiday was not immediately taken advantage of by most workers and little change was noticed in the first year after the Act was passed. Levels of observance of the first August Bank Holiday in 1871 varied around the country. In Liverpool it was celebrated almost as strictly as Christmas Day and Good Friday while in Manchester most warehouses closed but the mills stayed open. "The mass of the people did not seem to be aware that the day was a

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104 Index to the Report of the Select Committee on the Bank Holidays Bill, House of Commons, 22 June 1868, p5

105 Ibid, p5

106 Ibid, p5

107 Ibid, p19

holiday".[108] In London there were three or four times the number of excursion trains to Margate and other popular resorts. Crowds had left for a weekend at the seaside but they were almost all middle-class City workers. Most working people did not seem to realise the full meaning of the Act. Perhaps that was just as well as even this low take up was seriously underestimated by the railway companies. Tens of thousands of would-be excursionists made for the London railway stations only to find that in many cases no trains were available. Posters had announced that steamers would return from Margate jetty to Thames Haven at half past three but the crowds struggling to board the boat were so great that it was four o'clock before they reached Margate.[109]

It didn't take people long to catch on, and by the following year the August Bank Holiday had become as accepted by the public as the other traditional holidays at Whitsun and Easter. While the local papers in Leicester made no mention of the new holiday, apart from the usual advertisements for rail excursions in the 1871 and 1872 editions for the first week in August, by 1874 the papers reported that "Sir John Lubbock's Bank Holiday is rapidly advancing in popularity" as shown by the fact that in spite of an increase in fares the railway companies benefited from extra excursion traffic.[110] Leicester Town Council had given official sanction to the day by recommending Monday 3 August 1874 as a general

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108 Pimlott, op cit, p148

109 R Marchant, "Early Excursion Trains", Railway Magazine, Vol 100, No 638, June 1954, pp426-429, p429

110 Leicester Journal, 2 and 9 August 1872, Leicester Daily Mercury, 4 August 1874

holiday on which the number of shops open had decreased considerably from the previous year, those remaining open mainly ministering to the pleasure needs of their customers. The Council even provided municipal entertainment in the form of a civic procession and amusements on the occasion of laying the foundation stone of the new town hall.

In 1875 the Holidays Extension Act extended the provision of the Act to the docks, customs houses, inland revenue offices and bonding warehouses.[111] This made it easier for other types of businesses to observe the bank holidays and advanced further the acceptance of holidays for the working classes.

The bank holiday in those days took place at the beginning of August and so it was during the high summer rather than the present day arrangement of late in the season.

In some areas, especially southern England, where traditional wakes holidays had been successfully suppressed and consequently where there was no common focus for collective holidaymaking, the new bank holiday provided that focus. Bank Holiday Monday became a time for seaside excursions but it still took a little time for it to become extended beyond the weekend. For that reason, there was less expansion in the accommodation sector in the resorts serving the southern and Midlands area than there was for those serving Lancashire. In Southend in 1880 demand for accommodation for working-class visitors far exceeded the supply when 11,000, mainly East End trippers, tried to stay in the town over the

111 Pimlott, op cit, p149

weekend. The concentration of working-class holidays into bank holiday week created problems for the southern and south-eastern resort towns, with overcrowding in that week alone but few people staying longer than a day or a weekend for the rest of the summer. This meant, at least until the 1890s, that it was difficult for towns like Southend and the Kent resorts to successfully establish a summer season.[112] This was also the case for resorts with a mainly Midlands catchment area, Skegness was not established as a resort until the late nineteenth century.[113]

4.7 Visiting Friends and Relations

Although the events and activities described above relate to the development of what can be seen as "traditional" holidaymaking, throughout the period under scrutiny only a minority of workers would have been able to indulge in the activity on a regular basis. This does not mean that the poorer people who were excluded from the growing holiday market, never had a holiday of any kind away from home. Many urban, industrial workers, especially first and second generation proletarians would have friends and relatives living in the country. Better rail links would help make visits and stays with family in the countryside accessible to many who thereby managed to maintain kinship connections with those they had left behind through migration. In her study of Banbury, Margaret Stacey showed how important kinship networks were to the

112 Walton, op cit, p264

113 Skegness Holiday Guide, Skegness Tourist Office, c1989

community.[114] People who had migrated to the town in the nineteenth century maintained family relationships and so stays with family outside the town were integral to social life and encouraged future migration.

Visiting friends and relations was the only way many working-class people could get a holiday away from home. A Leicester woman remembers that as a child in the 1920s, she used to stay with friends of her father in North Kilworth, a village in the county. "They had a thatched cottage, and I had my own room there - I had to share with my three sisters at home".[115] This was the only way she could get a holiday. Another Leicester resident recalls that he was "fortunate that some friends of the family were farmers". He used to go and stay with them for his holidays.[116]

Joseph Gutteridge's autobiography of his life in Victorian Coventry, describes two such holidays staying with friends. The first, in the mid 1850s, was with farming friends at Smeaton, a Leicestershire village, near which he could arrive by train. Although not a resort, during his stay at Smeaton, Gutteridge enjoyed some typical holiday activities. As this part of Leicestershire was geologically different from his familiar Coventry and Warwickshire haunts he was able to search for unusual stones and fossils in the area, with his small daughter. He made excursions by rail into the town of Leicester where he visited the museum, Roman ruins and old churches

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114 Margaret Stacey, "Tradition and Change, a Study of Banbury", Oxford, 1960, p128

115 Cynthia Brown, "Wharf Street Revisited", Leicester 1997, p 90

116 Ibid, testimony of Mr Britten

just like a modern tourist would. Gutteridge concludes his description with the words "I cannot remember a time in which I so heartily enjoyed myself as during this visit to Smeaton. With renewed health I was better prepared for the struggle…".[117] As in so many descriptions of Victorian holidays, the emphasis in justification was clearly put on health (Gutteridge was recently widowed and as a result was not in the best of health or spirits prior to his trip) and self-improvement.

His second holiday was of a similar type, this time with friends in Northamptonshire in the late 1860s. Again Gutteridge enjoyed searching for specimens to add to his fossil collection, he visited Northampton and its museums and some of the stately homes in the area such as Althorpe, as well as the local countryside. Hobbies were important to Gutteridge, an intelligent and articulate man, whose class position gave him no opportunity for social advance. Ross McKibbin describes hobbies as giving pleasure through an activity emphasizing privacy and solitude within working-class domestic and industrial life which were all too collective.[118] They also permitted a socially acceptable level of intellectual activity in pursuits that involved mastery of a craft (Gutteridge also enjoyed marquetry, musical instrument and furniture making) and knowledge, discipline and skill.[119] This time Gutteridge was obviously in a better situation than in the

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117 The Autobiography of Joseph Gutteridge, op cit, p207

118 Ross McKibbin, "The Ideologies of Class, Social Relations in Britain, 1880-1950", Oxford, 1994, p164

119 McKibbin, op cit, p164

previous decade and became an annual holiday visitor to Northamptonshire.[120]

Visiting friends and relations remains to the present a substantial sector of the tourism market as although the visitors may not be staying in commercially provided accomodation, they and also the hosts may take part in leisure activities and visits to local places of interest during the stay.

4.8 Alternative, Temporary Employment - A Change Of Air?

Temporary work in an area away from the normal place of residence like hop and fruit picking, could give the opportunity of a "change of air" and a chance to explore new surroundings.

For residents of the East End of London, an annual September journey to Kent for the hop-picking was an eagerly awaited break from routine in the fresh country air. Families of hop-pickers would reside in tents, barns and makeshift dormitories. Although the conditions and facilities were not at all luxurious, they welcomed the opportunity to have a couple of weeks in the country combined with the chance to earn some extra money.

Picking the flowers is concentrated into a short period, usually the first few weeks of September, and before mechanisation took over in the 1950s and 1960s, the growers had relied for at least two hundred years, not

120 Gutteridge, ibid, pp205-207

only on casual labour from the surrounding towns and countryside, but on mass-migration of Londoners: poor people welcoming the chance to pick up a little money in the autumn sun. In the nineteenth century the beer consumption of a rapidly increasing population led to a huge increase in the acreage devoted to hops. This and the expansion of the railway network turned hop-picking into a vast Cockney family holiday with its own traditions and rituals.[121]

The hop farmers gained by this attitude as, according to George Orwell in his diary of his experiences as a hop-picker in 1931, "it was humiliating to see that most of the people there looked on it as a holiday - in fact, it is because hopping is regarded as a holiday that the pickers will take such starvation wages".[122] The railway companies also took advantage of this annual exodus and ran "Hoppers' Specials" with reduced fares from the 1850s right up until the 1960s. Initially cattle trucks were used and more trains were always needed for the return journey than the outward as many couldn't afford the fare and walked there, taking the train back as a treat with the money they had earned. Special trains also brought weekend visitors, husbands, fathers and other relations, to the hoppers' camps. In 1925, 71 hoppers' specials were run by the Southern Railway into Kent and 75 back out.[123] They carried 34,448 hoppers and 33,980 friends on

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121 Colin Ward and Dennis Hardy, "Goodnight Campers", op cit, p8

122 Orwell, George, "Hop Picking" in the Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell, Vol 1, "An Age Like This", 1920-1940, London, 1968, p66

123 Ward and Hardy, op cit, pp9-10

Saturdays with another 13,850 on Sundays. Even in 1945 sixty special trains brought 30,000 hop-pickers to Kent.

They had to bring bedding and utensils from home since few farmers would provide more than a hop-poke for sleeping on, straw to fill it with and a tin basin for washing. George Orwell describes his accommodation while hop-picking in 1931:

> Most of us slept in round tin huts, about ten feet across, with no glass in the windows, and all kinds of holes to let in the wind and rain. The furniture of these huts consisted of a heap of straw and hop vines and nothing else… The farm gave us free firewood, though not as much as we needed. The tap water was two hundred yards away and the latrine the same distance, but it was so filthy that one would have walked a mile sooner than use it.[124]

But for most of the hop-pickers their homes were almost equally poor in Poplar, Bermondsey and Southwark, and some would use the hopping holidays to save rent and take all their belongings while "flitting" from one landlord's room to another. An observer of 1883 makes the point that hop-picking provided a healthy escape by giving a holiday in the sun.

> Imagine for a moment the change from a stifling court and room where the sun never shines, where poor air is never breathed, where cleanliness is unknown, to sudden transportation to one of these hop-gardens.[125]

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124 George Orwell, op cit, p63

125 Ibid, pp10-11

These sentiments regarding the health giving properties of a period spent away from the city hop picking have been echoed in other oral testimonies:

> A hop picking holiday gave you health. The fumes from the hops did you a lot of good. That's why a lot of people went. I'd take the children with me, cooking implements and the necessary food. Parents had their children under the train seats to avoid paying for them. It wasn't a genteel holiday... You'd got to get up at about six in the morning and see people frying eggs and bacon on the embers. We'd pick hops from seven in the morning until six in the evening.[126]

This doesn't seem much of a holiday but hop pickers valued the change of scenery in the country and they enjoyed themselves, children especially, despite the poor conditions:

> I went to the hop-fields once, because the family always went, but it was terrible really. We had to sit or lie of a night-time in a big barn. One night they started saying there was earwigs around. I stayed awake all night. If I'd had cotton wool I'd have put it in my ears, but I hadn't, so I sat up all night with my hands over my ears.[127]

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126 Fifty Years Ago: Memories of the 1930s, ed Age Exchange Theatre Company, 1983, quoted by Christopher Hibbert, The English, London, 1987, p687

127 Ibid, p688

Although facilities were very basic, the hop-pickers had to pay for their accommodation out of their earnings. Even if the bed was only straw the price of a bale, often at higher than normal cost, was deducted.[128]

It wasn't just hop-picking that attracted families from industrial areas, fruit pickers too were often city people working in the country for a few weeks a year, to get a change of air.[129] The Select Committee on Holidays with Pay heard in evidence that:

> these people were obliged to undertake this work because otherwise they would not get a holiday, but if there were a legalised system of holidays with pay it would not be necessary for them to do this work.[130]

If the pickers were going to receive paid holidays and continue with the work, Sir Walter Citrine of the TUC gave the opinion that he didn't think that it would be:

> A good thing for the country as a whole to subsidise cheap labour; to pay a man for a holiday so that he can work for anything a farmer may care to pay him.[131]

He acknowledged that the fruit and hop-pickers' physical condition "improved enormously during the time they were working in the country, but it would have improved much

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128 Evidence of Sir Walter Citrine, Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, p44, para 261-267

129 Ibid

130 Ibid, p44, para 268

131 Ibid, p44, para 267

more if they did not work but simply enjoyed themselves for the holiday period".[132]

The same families went hopping for generations. Some even had their regular huts which they would visit at August Bank Holiday to clean and decorate. During the hopping season there was music, dancing, community singing and impromptue entertainment. In the larger gardens a marquee was hired for the end of picking celebrations and a real holiday atmosphere prevailed. The festivities associated with the end of picking had their parallel in harvest home celebrations of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and earlier. This is indicative of the cultural continuity and conceptual change inherent in pre-industrial traditions which evolved into a modern context, as discussed earlier. At the conclusion of the hop picking, a feast was held. A King and Queen of hop-pickers were chosen and a procession was made between the hopyard and the farmhouse.[133] Although recorded in the eighteenth century, the practice continued into the twentieth. According to a recollection of 1908, quoted by Bob Bushaway in his 1982 book, "By Rite", the participants made no connection between their celebrations and earlier rituals, associated with the social cohesion of a pre-market economy. Although the informant recalled the "man had to be a smock-faced un. We chose a young mon that 'ud make a nice gal like, and a smart woman as ud make a smart boy",[134] she made no reference to any symbolic significances. "It was all a bit o' fun, you'd

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132 Ibid, p44, para 262

133 Bob Bushaway, By Rite, Custom, Ceremony and Community in England 1700-1880, London, 1982, p137

134 Ibid

understand, and the King and Queen opened the ball together".[135] George Orwell observed, in 1931 that:

> On the last morning, when we had picked the last field, there was a queer game of catching the women and putting them in the bins... It is evidently an old custom, and all harvests have some custom of this kind attached to them.[136]

Improvements in accommodation took place. Hoppers regarded the picking season in Kent as a holiday. One former hopper described the experience thus:

> Hop pickings a glorified - no reverse that - a caravan holiday is a glorified hop picking holiday, without the fun. That's why they go in caravans, to pretend it was like down hopping. Well, it's not. The life, definitely, the life, made it fun. People have changed it. People have got so selfish and greedy. 'Cos everyone's trying to keep up with the Joneses. I wish we could go back to how it was. The holiday. The people. Lovely! [137]

Hopping survived through the first half of the twentieth century until it ended due to mechanisation in the 1960s. Games and entertainment based on role reversal, such as men dressing in women's clothes have survived from end of harvest rituals and celebrations for temporary agricultural workers into the twentieth century. Such

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135 Ibid

136 George Orwell, Op cit, p67

137 Gilda O'Neill, Pull No More Bines - Hop picking: Memories of a vanished way of life, London, 1990, p127

amusements remain a feature of some holiday camp and package holiday entertainment.[138] In the nineteenth century, harvest festivities and frolics took place in August, coinciding with what became the traditional holiday month. In the eighteenth century Harvest Home was "still the greatest holiday in England: and it concludes at once the most laborious and most lucrative of the farmer's employment and unites repose and profit".[139] Later, in 1827, Harvest Home was described as "the great August festival of this country".[140] The communal merrymaking ceased not because of mechanisation but the introduction of piece rates into agriculture which broke the former relationships between farmers and labourers who became concerned with profit and earning-power rather than custom.[141] These practices survived longest in the southern counties of England and perhaps contributed to the establishment of August as the preferred holiday month in that region just as the wakes had done in the north.

A demolition worker born in Shoreditch, London, in 1903 describes how he did one job in the country between long spells of unemployment, in 1924. This, to him, was a holiday from life in the big city.

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138 The writer observed a "beauty contest" where men dressed in their partners' clothes on an Airtours holiday in Tunisia in 1994. Also, on the Costa Brava in 1997, hotel staff dressed up to entertain guests, involving some role reversals.

139 David Hoseason Morgan, Harvesters and Harvesting, 1840-1900, London, 1982, p168

140 David Hoseason Morgan, op cit, p167

141 Ibid

> I was recruited into a small gang to go and demolish a wing of Major Wilson's (a boxing promter) country house near Tugby, a little village about four miles out of Leicester. I felt quite excited as we piled ourselves and our tools into the lorry and headed north - here I was, a young lad of 21, going for at least a fortnight's trip into the country. Last time I had been out of London had been for a trip to Leigh-on-Sea... I got more excited as we got near Tugby, because we saw a hunt, complete with red jackets, little black jockey caps, highly polished boots and crops - quite a sight for Cockney eyes.[142]

Temporary work did not have to be outdoors, free time during the course of the alternative working-week gave the opportunity for exploration and the pursuit of leisure activities. In 1870 Joseph Gutteridge, the Coventry ribbon weaver, took up an appointment to work a loom of six tiers of shuttles which made beautiful pictures and bookmarkers woven in silk,[143] at an exhibition near Bradford in Yorkshire.[144] He took this engagement so that he could visit Yorkshire and search for fossils in the area, as he had done on holidays at the homes of friends. He had lodgings with a local woman. There were three other boarders in the house besides himself. During his stay he also visited many places of interest such as Halifax, Kirkstall Abbey and the moors.

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142 Reminiscence of John Welch, Demolition labourer, in Working Lives, Volume One 1905-1945, London, 1975, p45

143 Articles produced in this way were known as Stevenographs, after the innovator.

144 Autobiography of Joseph Gutteridge, op cit, p211

4.9 Associational and Charitable Holiday Provision

For poor children, charities, churches and youth organisations sometimes provided holidays. For young men who joined the Militia, Rifle Volunteers or Territorial Army, summer camps gave the opportunity of a week off work, away from home under canvas. The Militia was a part-time form of army service dating from the Napoleonic Wars. From 1859 it became known as the Rifle Volunteers and provided a military "hobby" for young men.[145] After 1881, these groups were attached to regular county infantry regiments. The militia and Rifle Volunteers were abolished and replaced by the Territorial Force in 1907, which was renamed the Territorial Army in 1921.[146] The Territorial Army continues in existence in a numerically depleted form and has continued to offer the attraction of an annual camp for young men.[147] The Leicester Advertiser reported on the local Volunteers' annual summer camp at Great Yarmouth in 1894.[148] Excursion trains took visitors to the camp from the Midlands throughout the week. This kept the camp full of visitors.

> Not only the lady and gentleman friends of the rank and file but thousands of ordinary excursionists went to

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145 John Cannon, Oxford Companion to British History, Oxford, 1997, p642

146 Ibid

147 The writer's own brother joined the TA as hobby in the 1960s and early 1970s, enjoying the additional time off work to go to camp and free horse riding as he entered a cavalry regiment, the now disbanded Yeomanry.

148 Leicester Advertiser, 12 August, 1894

watch the Volunteers, regularly plying between the piers, amusements and the camp in large numbers.[149]

The East Anglian Territorials camp at Thetford in 1911, was reputed to have been the largest event of its kind in the Eastern Counties.[150] Despite an early harvest, which prevented a number of men putting in an appearance, twelve thousand were transported there, together with 1,100 horses, fifty guns, and a hundred and fifty wagons, plus tents, bedding, camping equipment and baggage.[151] The camps provided not just a change of environment for the part-time soldiers but an attraction as a visual spectacle for other holiday-makers and excursionists.

The temperance movement's efforts amongst workers and the poor could be seen not just as philanthropic but as attempts to impose middle-class manners on the working class.[152] Temperance societies offered picnics and excursions as alternatives to recreations involving the threat to morals of drunkeness and insobriety. These activities also had the ulterior motive of evangelism, to recruit new members to churches which also provided a weekly programme of voluntary pursuits such as mothers' meetings, sales of work, mutual improvement groups, Christian Endeavour, cottage meetings, missions, Bible readings, choirs, Dorcas Clubs, sports clubs and plays.[153] In Charles Booth's survey of the 1890s, a Presbyterian

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149 Ibid

150 Great Eastern Railway Magazine, Vol 1, No 8, August 1911, p274

151 Ibid

152 Brian Harrison, Drink and the Victorians - the Temperance Question in England 1815-1872, London, 1971, p24

153 Harrison, op cit, p171

minister claimed that "teetotal societies constituted the churches' fishing ground for their more regular membership - from younger age-groups through the Band of Hope, and from lower social levels through the teetotal experience meeting".[154] However, teetotalism was not popular with the working-class public. The famous Baptist, temperance campaigner and excursion organiser, Thomas Cook was among a persecuted minority when living in Market Harborough in the 1830s.

> Harborough ranked in the estimation of the public as one of the most discordant and riotous af all anti-teetotal populations…. My house in Adam and Eve Street was violently assailed, and brick bats came flying through the window to the imminent danger of Mrs Cook and myself. On one occoccasion a horse's leg bone, taken from a cart-load of bones standing in… the street…, was thrown at me with such violence that, striking me on the back of the neck, I was felled to the ground, and it is strange how I got up and gave chase to my assailant.[155]

Cook caught the attacker, who was brought before the magistrates and fined. This fine and others was probably paid by a notorious Market Harborough drinking club known as "The Tenth".[156] The unpopularity of militant teetotalism among adults led the campaigners to look towards the future generation and in the mid-1840s they

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154 Charles Booth, Life and Labour In London, Third Series, V(1902 edition), p155, cited by Harrison, op cit, p171

155 Thomas Cook, unreferenced source quoted by Robert Ingle in Thomas Cook of Leicester, Bangor, Gwynedd, 1991, p5

156 Robert Ingle, ibid

set up the Band of Hope, an organisation that worked with six to sixteen year olds. By March 1849 the Leeds Band of Hope had pledged more than 4,000 children.[157] The aim was to raise children in sobriety rather than concentrate on reclaiming adults. The children were encouraged to sing temperance songs and, of course, to influence their parents. The pledge was not very onerous to children who had not yet experienced temptation. By 1860 there were 129 Bands of Hope in London. Manchester and Salford had ten groups in its union when established in 1863, a number which quickly rose to 166 by 1871.[158] By this time there were several hundred thousand child members of the Band of Hope.[159] Meetings of the Bands of Hope usually took place fortnightly and included prayers, music, recitations and, of course, pledge-signing. Occasional picnics, tea-meetings and outings provided extra motivation for attendance. The Band of Hope was a respectable institution from the start. The large membership of the organisation should not give the impression that children were empty vessels into which middle-class notions of respectability could be poured. The notion of submissive and regimented children is misleading. According to research by Stephen Humphries, many older children and youths viewed the proceedings at meetings with humourous detachment and would gain comic relief by inverting the oaths and pledges that they were required to make.[160] When chanting the pledge one man recalled that he and his friends would change it to "I promise not to abstain from

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157 Harrison, op cit, p192

158 Harrison, op cit, p193

159 Harrison, op cit, p318

160 Stephen Humphries, Hooligans or Rebels? An Oral History of Working-class Childhood and Youth 18898-1939, Oxford, 1981, p133

alcoholic liquor".[161] The promise of outings and tea parties made membership of the organisation by working-class youth instrumental rather than demonstrative of any commitment to teetotalism or religion. The Band of Hope and also Sunday schools experienced a sudden decline in attendance among young people once they reached the age at which they could no longer be compelled to attend by their parents. According to Humphries research the vast majority of working-class members of these organisations were lost between the ages of fourteen and seventeen. This growing detachment and disaffection from religious organisations was, to some extent, the fruit of many years' larking about, which effectively distanced working-class youth from religious dogma and loosened bonds of duty and deference.[162]

In Leicester, the Ragged School Mission was responsible for arranging the activities of "Pearson's Fresh Air Fund". This was a charity designed to give poor urban children a taste of the countryside. Each year a "treat field" was hired at the village of Thurmaston, only a short distance from the city. Every Saturday for three weeks five hundred children and helpers would travel there by train from a poorer area of Leicester.[163] Recalling her childhood in the 1920s and 1930s, a woman reminisced of the Fresh Air Fund trips:

> Very few children today could realise the wonder and sense of adventure these ragged, underfed children felt. First the train ride into what - for them - was

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161 Humphries, op cit, p134

162 Ibid

163 Cynthia Brown, Wharf Street Revisitied, Leicester, 1997, p89

> the unknown. Then disembarkation at Rothley, from where they marched crocodile fashion to the Treat Field, singing as they marched, the little ones being carried piggyback style. Once there, the wonders had only just begun. In the marquees were mounds of sandwiches and cakes, washed down with lemonade. For those who wanted it, games were organised. Cricket, football, sack races, egg-and-spoon and three-legged races. For others there was the delight of paddling in the stream at the bottom of the meadow, or climbing trees, or just daydreaming in the tall, sweet-smelling grass… For those 1500 children, that single day in the country must have been a vision of near Heaven.[164]

Recalling a camping holiday in the late 1920s, arranged by the Ragged School Mission in Leicester, a man relates that their means of transport to "Skeggy" was on the back of a coal lorry loaned by a local coal merchant. He enthused that being "crammed onto the lorry with a marquee and all the other apparatus required for a week's camp was the highlight of the year for us".[165] One of the camp's leader's employers donated sacks of potatoes for it, so it was a real community initiative.

The Country Holiday Fund was a philanthropic scheme started by Lady St Hellier to give poor children a break from urban life. A schoolteacher, who worked in Hackney between 1916 and 1923, recalled taking girls in her class to Tongham near Farnham for a fortnight. Those who could not afford it were helped financially by the Country

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164 Testimony of Dorothy Rayson of Leicester, ibid

165 Cynthia Brown, op cit, reminiscence of Mr Len Wilkinson, p91

Holiday Fund but the trip was already subsidised and only cost a minimum amount, she recollected.[166]

> Most of the children had never seen the country; it was the only holiday they had. They didn't wear anything special for holiday. They came in what they'd got - they all had to pack their own parcels, nothing very special, but all clean. Everybody at the school had the opportunity to go at some time… The girls slept in a conservatory which was set out like a dormitory. It was a beautiful fortnight, but we had them all down with temperatures and ever so poorly because the sun streamed in through all the windows. We had to make calico hats for the girls to protect their heads. We went for walks in the country and they had never seen anything like it. They did some school work while they were there, as well - a sort of educational holiday.[167]

The Scouts and Guides and other church youth organisations also held camps and took their young members on holiday. A Leicester man remembers when he joined the Boy Scouts he was asked if he would like to go on holiday. The Scouts saved up all their pennies and went to Clovelly. The boys "had a wonderful time there… it was beautiful".[168]

Oral reminiscences suggest that sport, the band and the annual camp were the activities which most attracted members to these voluntary youth associations. The prayers, drilling and military manoeuvres of the uniformed

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166 Reminiscence of Ida Allison, née Rex, Working Lives Volume One 1905-1945, Hackney, London, 1975, p24

167 Ibid

168 Cynthia Brown, op cit, reminiscence of Mr Ernie Martin, p91

organisations were usually regarded as tiresome concessions to authority, to be avoided whenever possible.[169] The respectable ethos of these movements was often viewed with cynical detatchment by working-class young people.

The co-operative movement also had its own youth organisation, the Woodcraft Folk, established to offer an alternative to the perceived militarism and religious indoctrination of the uniformed companies of Boy Scouts, Girl Guides and Boys Brigades or Church Lads. The Woodcraft Folk encouraged socialisation into a culture of co-operation based on the ideals of the movement. Camping trips were a significant part of the organisation's activities with children and young people, offering an alternative to the inculcation of dominant cultural values of the other youth movements.

4.10 Conclusion

A guaranteed national, potential tourist market could not depend on charity or individual thrift and initiative which, as we have seen, for cultural and organisational reasons tended to be regional or dependent on membership of a particular club, organisation or occupational group. Lack of paid time off was obviously a disincentive to the development of working-class tourism, although ways and means of enjoying a holiday could be found by those who were determined. For a real mass market to develop, holidays with pay were essential and the following chapter will look at how workers managed to secure this through the collective bargaining process.

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169 Stephen Humphries, op cit, p134

CHAPTER 5

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING FOR HOLIDAYS WITH PAY

5.1 Introduction

The means by which some groups of workers managed to secure a holiday, without pay, was explored in the preceding section. These efforts secured holidays away from home for only a small minority of the working class, but their demands led to the early development of resorts and amenities for visitors in seaside towns like Blackpool, which by the 1930s had seven million visitors a year and Southend which annually attracted five and a half million. Hastings welcomed three million, Bournemouth and Southport two million each and Eastbourne just one million.[1] These figures show that the majority of trippers and holidaymakers, twelve and a half million of them, excluding those in the smaller or more select seaside towns, went to the working-class oriented resorts of Blackpool and Southend in 1937 when only four million people had paid holidays.

It now remains to examine how payment for holidays was achieved, at first by a minority of workers in public amenity industries, extending to well organised sections of the labour force and eventually to almost all those permanently employed. This discussion follows a number of themes such as the case of white-collar workers, holidays as a form of discipline for utility and other employees, contributory schemes, unpaid holidays through collective bargaining and negotiations for holidays with

[1] Elizabeth Brunner, Holiday Making and the Holiday Making Trades, Oxford, 1945, p8

pay. It looks at the cases of individual trades, industries and campaigns rather than a strictly chronological pattern of development.

Before holidays for the working class could be developed further, it was imperative that both time and financial resources were available to facilitate them. Those in occupations with a high degree of trade union organisation were in the strongest position to secure these resources. An understanding of the differences and variety of methods used to achieve holidays for their members by trade unions will be developed and illustrated through a number of case studies of different branches of industry.

The movement towards paid holidays for the majority began very slowly, speeded up following the social changes of the Edwardian era and First World War and with the increased bargaining strength of more organised groups of workers in the years immediately following the war, only to slow down again in the subsequent recession from 1920 to the mid 1930s. About one and a half million manual workers were covered by agreements for holidays with pay in 1922 but this number did not increase substantially until the late 1930s.[2] Momentum in the campaign gathered once more after 1932 when the economy began to recover. By then the political and industrial environment was more receptive to social reform. Thanks to sustained pressure from the trade union movement, the campaign for paid holidays culminated in 1937, with the appointment of a tripartite committee of inquiry, chaired by Lord Amulree, the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay. The report of this committee in 1938 led to legislation in the form of

[2] Planning for Holidays, a Broadsheet issued by PEP (Political and Economic Planning), No 194, 13 October, 1942, p20, see also Stephen G Jones, Workers at Play, London, 1986, p18

the Holidays with Pay Act. This was two years after the law on holidays with pay in France, passed by the Popular Front.

5.2 Paid Leave for White-collar Workers

Before looking at how workers achieved more leisure time and paid leave from work through collective bargaining procedures, it must be remembered that by the time of the Act, salaried and non-manual workers already had holidays taken into account when calculating salaries, arrangements which derived their status through established custom and practice.[3] Examples of this can be found dating back to the early nineteenth century. This presented no problems as the pay could be calculated based on fifty weeks but divided into fifty-two or twelve instalments. Being short staffed during holiday periods was also not particularly problematic as colleagues could cover for the absent person, perhaps by sharing amongst those who remained, the work which should have been done by their missing colleague. This was acceptable, as the same would be done for each individual when his or her turn for leave came around. These arrangements relied on staggering of holidays among the employees concerned.

The creators of the late Victorian fictional character, Charles Pooter, had this kind of scheme in mind when their protagonist took a week's holiday at Broadstairs. Pooter was able to ask his employer for permission to postpone his holiday for a week as he could "not get the room". The date in the supposed diary of 7 August indicates the high demand of the previous week, which had included a Bank Holiday. "Diary of a Nobody" was

[3] Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, 1937, p126, para 6

serialised in Punch between 1888 and 1889 and humorously reflects the advance of holidaymaking amongst the lower middle-class, white-collar workers (Pooter was a clerk in a London mercantile business) and this group's concern with respectability and gentility at a reasonable price. After missing the last train between Margate and Broadstairs when visiting friends also on holiday, Pooter grudgingly remarks that he had "to drive back to Broadstairs which cost seven and sixpence".[4]

A single man, William Andrews, the Coventry ribbon-weaver, designer and, eventually, factory manager, records several instances of paid holidays granted by his employers during the years between 1851 and 1866. The references by Andrews to his holidays are astonishing. He took at least one holiday a year between 1851 and 1866. The first of these periods of leave was to enable him to visit the Great Exhibition, a trip he won as a prize for his design work whilst an apprentice. The following year he went on an excursion to London to see the Duke of Wellington's funeral, staying in the City for three days. In 1855, his employer said he could have two or three days holiday as it "would do his health good". He had had scarcely any holiday during his recently completed apprenticeship.[5] He went to Nottingham to see an uncle during this short period of leave. Andrews had saved £16 12s 2d during his apprenticeship and earned £21 7s 9d, including £9 10 shillings from the government.[6]

Andrews' employer sent him to Paris, in 1856, where he spent the entire spring, combining business and tourism

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[4] George and Weedon Grossmith, Diary of a Nobody, Wordsworth edition, 1994, pp61-68

[5] William Andrews, the Unpublished Diary of William Andrews, Master and Artisan in Victorian England, London, 1969, p21

[6] Ibid, p23

during his stay. He was already familiar with Paris having received a trip to the Exhibition there as a prize for some designs the year before. In July of 1856 he went to London for a few days. At this time, half a year's salary was fifty pounds. Later in 1856 he went on holiday with his father and a friend to Scotland to visit relatives and tour the country. They went to Loch Lomond, climbed Ben Lomond, took a steamer trip on Loch Katrine, visited Oban and Glasgow by steamer, went to Sterling and Edinburgh and even spent a day in Liverpool on the way back to Coventry. The next year, 1857, he took an excursion to Chatsworth in June and then in September he went to the Art Treasures Exhibition in Manchester. He made the most of his time in Manchester visiting not just the exhibition but the museum and Peel Park. Whilst in the north he went on holiday to the Isle of Man where he stayed for six days.

In 1862 Andrews went to London combining general tourist activities such as museum visits, going to Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament, with the International Exhibition of that year. Again he added a holiday on to this visit; the following week he went to the Isle of Wight via Brighton where he stayed for four days before going to Salisbury and Stone Henge and then walking near Evesham and Stratford on the way home. The expenses of this holiday were seven pounds eight shillings, about 7.6 per cent of his income as he was earning a hundred pounds a year at this time.[7] On his return he states that his health had recovered and he was in good trim. The year 1864 saw Andrews spending a few days in North Wales at Rhyl and Llandudno. His salary had now risen to £110 and then shortly increased to £120 a year.[8] In June of the following year he obtained leave

[7] Ibid, p59

[8] Ibid, p64

from his employer and went on holiday to Devon for a week. He travelled by train to Bristol and then by steam boat to Ilfracombe. He spent much of his time touring the area, going to Clovelly, Barnstaple, Plymouth, Paignton and Torquay. When accommodation is mentioned he stayed in inns.[9]

Andrews does not seem to have had any difficulty affording an annual holiday and, as a time served freeman who progressed into management, probably obtained some payment or bonus for his time off. He does mention one occasion when he asked for leave but his employer could not spare him, which implies it was an individual arrangement between himself and his employer and not a right. As a single man who was also quite thrifty, Andrews was in a position to save up to pay for his holidays even if he could not always secure paid time off. He had accumulated £106 13s 11d in the Coventry Savings Bank by December 1857.[10]

This diary, although it does not go into very much detail, gives information about the kind of holiday that a single man in a black-coated occupation might undertake should he have wished. William Andrews was not typical of his class; he was ambitious and eventually became a ribbon factory manager before going into business on his own account. He never married so he was in a better position to travel than most family men with additional responsibilities and expenses. When he found himself out of work, he toured France and Switzerland, combining tourism with his search for employment in the continental ribbon weaving centres, where he also expanded his knowledge of the trade which put him in good stead on his

[9] William Andrews, op cit, pp13-74

[10] Ibid, p33

return to Coventry.[11] It is interesting to see from the diary, how much Andrews mixed informative visits with leisure activities. His dedication to self-improvement rewarded him with intellectual and social advancement; the son of a humble ex-soldier from Scotland who married and settled in Coventry, he became a manager and later owned his own business.

In 1875 the Civil Service Enquiry Commission collected information about holidays in business houses and in public utility corporations. This enquiry covered banks, insurance companies and stores, the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, the Railway Clearing House and the London and North Western Railway. The usual allowance for office workers was a fortnight, often rising to three weeks or a month among higher grades or after long service. In his autobiography, "The Superannuated Man", Charles Lamb wrote as early as 1825 describing his youth in the eighteenth century, "Besides Sundays, I had a day at Easter, and a day at Christmas, with a full week in the summer. This last was a great indulgence; and the prospect of its recurrence, I believe, alone kept me up through the year… Without it I could scarcely have maintained my thraldom".[12] John Stuart Mill in his autobiography related how at India House there were holidays not exceeding a month in the year.[13] Charles Booth's survey of the people of London suggests that by the 1890s a fortnight's holiday with pay was general amongst clerical employees in the larger firms in commerce and industry. He mentioned that a firm of solicitors gave not only a holiday but also a gratuity of from two pounds to twenty-five pounds before the holiday

[11] Ibid, p41

[12] J R R Pimlott, The Englishman's Holiday, London, 1947, p154

[13] Ibid

was taken, probably by way of an annual bonus or commission.[14]

At the Sheffield Smelting Company works in 1882, the office staff were given all the general holidays as well as a fortnight off with pay in the summer. The manual workers, although they had six general holidays were only paid for two of them, Whit Monday and Christmas Day.[15] The workmen were first given paid time off in 1850, when a director received an anonymous letter asking for a paid holiday on Christmas Day, a practice that was at that time springing up in other works in Sheffield.[16] This concession was granted immediately, according to the firm's history written in 1960 by a director of the company.[17]

At Pilkington Brothers' glass factory, production workers and office staff in 1876 enjoyed the privilege of three days' holiday in a year, Christmas Day, Good Friday and the Friday of Newton Race Week in June, which changed to Whit Monday in about 1880.[18] August Bank Holiday was not taken by Pilkington's employees until 1882. Inequality though, as in other enterprises, was part of Pilington's employment practice. Departmental managers sometimes had a week's holiday with pay, but the employers did not encourage it. When one manager, who earned five pounds ten shillings a week, was away, his work was covered by a deputy earning only three pounds.[19] The Board decided to

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[14] Charles Booth , Life and Labour of the People of London, published between 1889 and 1902, cited by Pimlott, p154

[15] Ronald E Wilson, Two Hundred Precious Years, A History of the Sheffield Smelting Company Limited, 1760-1960, p166

[16] Ibid, p124

[17] Ronald E Wilson, op cit.

[18] T C Barker, Pilkington Brothers and the Glass Industry, London, 1960, p175

[19] T C Barker, op cit, p175

subtract the difference between the two wages from his holiday pay and added the note "last year we paid him in full but holydays(sic) are becoming more the fashion and it behoves us to check the tendency".[20]

In local government in 1899, most officers in York had a fortnight's paid holiday a year and juniors a week but payment was not made until after the holiday.[21]

In 1919, assistant clerks in the civil service increased their annual leave allowance from fourteen to eighteen days a year plus eight public holidays. This rose to twenty-four days from eighteen for those with over ten years' service.[22] The CPSA union's conference heard a resolution calling for twenty-four days minimum leave, rising to twenty-seven days after eleven to fifteen years of service and thirty days thereafter.[23] This motion was not passed by the delegates. By 1920, the Whitley Council for the civil service gave holidays ranging from twenty-four days for the lowest grades up to forty-eight for the highest.[24] The CPSA was pressing for this minimum of twenty-four days' paid leave to be extended to include typists and shorthand typists in 1921, who presumably had been excluded from the Whitley Council recommendations.[25] Conference passed a resolution from the Ministry of Labour in Westminster calling for a twenty-four day minimum entitlement, rising to twenty-eight days annual leave for those with between five and ten years' service and thirty-six days for those who had been in continuous

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[20] Ibid, p176

[21] Alec Spoor, "White Collar Union - 60 Years of NALGO, London, 1967, p7

[22] Civil and Public Servants' Association (CPSA)Annual Report, 1919, p10

[23] CPSA Annual Report 1919, p14

[24] Alec Spoor, op cit, p84, CPSA Annual Report 1919-1920

[25] CPSA Annual Report, 1921-22

employment for more than ten years.[26] This demand had not been achieved by 1932 when the minimum entitlement for all employees was twenty-three days off and thirty-five days for those in Grade One.[27]

Herbert Elvin, General Secretary of the National Union of Clerks and Administrative Workers, in 1932 was able to write to Mr Tracey of the TUC "in regard to clerical and administration workers, paid holidays are the rule rather than the exception".[28]

Evidently, in the 1930s, only a minority of employees in Britain could benefit from holidays with pay. The white-collar workers discussed above were in a privileged position regarding working conditions compared with most manual workers. This system of spreading payment for fifty weeks' or even less work over fifty-two weeks, only applied to a small minority of the workforce. As late as 1937 about fourteen million workers were still outside any system of allowing paid holidays.[29]

5.3 Discipline and Reward - Towards Time-off for Manual Workers

The Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, in 1937, referred to no instance of paid holidays earlier than 1884, when a large chemical firm, Brunner-Mond in Northwich, gave a week, although the Industrial Welfare Society, without giving details, claimed to have traced

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[26] Ibid

[27] CPSA Annual Report, 1931-32

[28] Letter from Herbert Elvin, General Secretary of the National Union of Clerks and Administration Workers to Mr Tracey of the TUC, 28 January 1932, MSS 292 114/1

[29] Minutes of Evidence Before the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, 1937, p26, para 48

an instance as early as 1875.[30] Brunner-Mond used the holidays as an incentive to encourage regular attendence. In 1884 only forty-two per cent of employees qualified for a paid holiday which rose to ninety-eight per cent in the early 1900s. In 1902, only two days' absence could lose someone their holiday but the firm paid two weeks' money for just one week's holiday[31]. As a strategy to reduce absenteeism, the rise in numbers qualifying for paid leave under those conditions shows that it was a success. As mentioned in the last chapter, a savings club also existed at the works from 1881. Brunner-Mond also reduced its shifts from twelve to eight hours without loss of pay in 1890. The advantages of this, not just to the workers but to the firm, were soon optimistically claimed to be obvious. "The doctor had to attend only half as many men in 1893 as in 1889. Drunkenness common four years before had largely disappeared by 1893".[32]

The earliest examples of large scale holidays with pay for non-salaried workers date from those given by some firms to enable employees to visit the Great Exhibition in 1851, for example, Goodwin and Hobson, of Leicester gave all those employed in their brewery four days off and the money to pay for a ticket to London.[33] The Great Exhibition, though, was a one-off event and did not set any long term precedent for working conditions. Memories of the visits to London would remain as a stimulus to the desire for further travel. An example predating 1851 is that of the South Metropolitan Gas Company which granted

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[30] Minutes of Evidence Before the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, p26, Pimlott, op cit, p155

[31] G C Martin, Working-class Holidaymaking Down to 1947, MA Thesis, University of Leicester, 1968, p47

[32] E H Phelps Brown with Margaret Browne, A Century of Pay, London, 1968, p211

[33] Payne's Leicestershire Advertiser, 5 July 1851

wages for the holidays on Good Friday and Christmas Day. From 1860 this organisation was giving a week's paid holiday for all workers in constant employment.[34] This was less an advance than a form of discipline to encourage good attendence and loyalty. The Gasworkers and General Labourers' Union achieved the eight hour day in 1889. A representative of the Lancashire branch of the Union told the Royal Commission on Labour in 1894 that holidays without pay were not welcome, as the present pay was not sufficient to keep wife and family.[35] Signed hands who had not lost more than seven days work in the previous twelve months were entitled to a week's holiday with pay.

Following the success of the eight hour day campaign, the South Metropolitan Gas Company reacted by setting up a profit sharing and co-partnership scheme with the intention of excluding the Union and using the co-partners' committee as the spokesmen of the workers in all matters - in effect a company union. The company required all co-partners to sign individual contracts of employment, a move which was incompatible with collective bargaining. The Gas Workers' Union had been weakened from the failure of a strike against the reintroduction of the twelve hour day and could make no headway against the South Metropolitan Gas Company co-partners committee until the constitution in 1919 of a Joint Industrial Council (JIC).

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[34] Stephen G Jones, The British Labour Movement and Working Class Leisure, 1918-1939, unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Manchester, 1983, p138; See also the Royal Commission on Labour: Minutes of Evidence, Group C, Vol III, PP 1893-1894, cmd 6894 xxxvi, evidence of George Livesey, Q26710, p220

[35] Royal Commission on Labour, 1894; J A R Pimlott, op cit, p151

In its second year, 1920, the JIC agreed on a week's holiday with pay for all workers in the gas industry.[36] This took place during the short boom following World War One, when British trade union membership reached a record high of about 8.25 million, before the sudden and rapid decline commencing the following year.[37]

One of the earliest examples of contractual holidays with pay through the collective bargaining process is that of railway workers, who were members of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants (ASRS). The Great Northern Railway gave three days per year in 1872, provided the employees had at least one year's service. Public opinion had had a role to play here. Fatigue of the rail workers had a detrimental effect on safety and had been recognised as a contributory factor in accidents, as publicised in 1870 when companies overworking men to the point where their senses were numbed were blamed for the high accident rate.[38] After the Second Reform Act of 1867, the franchise was extended to include some of the artisan classes, so aspiring politicians respected the opinions of the better paid railway employees.[39] This concession was linked to other gains including a nine hour day in the workshops and pay rises following the union's founding in 1871 during a period of boom. The London North Western Railway (LNWR), a Select Committee was told, gave a great proportion of its men a week off with pay. It was emphasised that this was not a matter of right but a reward for good conduct and was at the discretion of the superintendent.[40] To qualify a worker

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[36] H A Clegg, General Union - A Study of the National Union of General and Municipal Workers, Oxford, 1954 pp151-154

[37] Supplement to the Ministry of labour Gazette for March 1937

[38] Philip S Bagwell, The Railwaymen, London, 1963, p66

[39] Philip S Bagwell, op cit, pp 66 and 67.

[40] Select Committee on Railway Servants (Hours of Labour) Bill, 1890-1

had not to have lost more than seven day's work in the previous year.

In York, a city with a large number of railway workers, Seebohm Rowntree found in 1901, that people in his class 'D' commonly took a few days' summer holiday out of the city.[41] Rowntree's class 'D' comprised 52.6% of the working-class population in York, families with an income at that time of at least thirty shillings a week. Railway workers enjoyed not just better holidays but special rail facilities. They could have free or concessionary rail tickets for themselves and their families, which would have made holidays and excursions more affordable.[42]

Not all railway servants were able to avail themselves of special facilities. Station masters and signalmen on the Great Central Railway, complained in letters to the company magazine that they did not receive the holidays they were entitled to due to pressure of work. Correspondence from a signalman described the longing of men in this occupation for their annual leave.[43] The job was highly stressful, bells and telephones ringing all day and no margin of error allowed. Sadly, the man complained that because demand for this work was so high, he and other signalmen could not be spared until the winter, when they were compelled to stay by the fireside. In the same journal, another signalman wrote advocating six days holiday without loss of pay, because of the forfeiting of free Sundays throughout the year.[44] This

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[41] Cited by Pimlott, p151

[42] Elizabeth Roberts, A Woman's Place - An Oral History of Working-class Women, 1890-1940, Oxford, 1984, p115

[43] The Great Central Railway Journal, Vol II, No 4, October, 1906, p106

[44] Ibid, p107

would have given them parity with other workers on the Great Central who received this amount of leave. A station master, in 1907, claimed he had had no holiday at all the previous year although it had been applied and repeatedly pressed for.[45] He was required to be at his station between 6.30 am and 10.30 pm and had no Sundays off for eight months. Another station master complained that holidays were always postponed until the winter months compelling them to stay at home because of the weather.[46]

Any employee with six months' service on the Great Eastern Railway received three days' paid leave. This increased to four days for those with five years' in the company or more. These workers were also given an unlimited amount of "privilege" tickets, by means of which a railwayman and his wife and children or other dependents could travel to any part of Britain at quarter rate fares. Twice a year they were granted free passes to points served by Great Eastern trains.[47] One of these passes had to be used at the time of the August holiday or be forfeited. Most of the Great Eastern's employees worked at Stratford in east London. As hardly any of them failed to make use of their passes, the August exodus from Stratford was quite an annual event.[48] So great was the number of railway servants, around eight thousand of them, leaving the district for the holiday, special train arrangements to avoid inconvenience to the public had to be made.[49] The Works closed down several days before the Bank Holiday, on which day and on the Saturday before it, the use of passes was forbidden. Most

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[45] The Great Central Railway Journal, Vol II, No 10, April 1907, p312

[46] Ibid

[47] Great Eastern Railway Magazine, Vol 1, No 8, August 1911, p272

[48] Ibid

[49] Ibid, p273

of the travellers left on Thursday, the first day of the holiday and the bulk of them returned the following Wednesday. The most popular destinations accessible by free pass were Yarmouth, Southend and Clacton, followed by Lowestoft and Felixstowe.[50] Some people also went further afield, to get to Scarborough, in 1911, a London rail worker could travel to York free of charge and then complete the journey with a privilege ticket costing only 1s 9d.[51]

An example of paid leave being offered as a reward for conduct acceptable to the employer, from outside the municipal and public service sector was at the Sheffield Smelting Company and at Metal Box. At the Sheffield Smelting Company, from 1900, paid holidays were offered on a sliding scale from nine days for those who had twenty-three or more years' service down to two days for workers with only nine months with the firm. To encourage the taking of a real holiday away from home, each man was given an extra pound towards their expenses, provided their holiday was more than eight miles away from Sheffield.[52] The circular notifying workers of the beginning of holidays with pay at the company, emphasised that this, like the giving of bonuses, formed no part of the conditions of service and applied for the year of 1900 only, although the directors hoped to make it an annual provision.[53] An element of discipline was contained within the scheme as an hour was deducted from the holiday for every occasssion during the preceding twelve months that a workman had been late.[54] As the period in

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[50] Ibid

[51] Ibid, p272

[52] Ronald E Wilson, "A History of the Sheffield Smelting Company Limited, 1760-1960, London, 1960, p188

[53] Ronald E Wilson, op cit, p290

[54] Ibid, p291

question ended on 31 March 1900 and the circular was dated 1 June, then the workforce would have been unaware of any effect unpunctuality would have had on holiday entitlement. It was not until 1945 that a fortnight's leave with pay was introduced, which rose in 1949 to three weeks for those with at least twenty years' service, but just one week for people with between six months and a year with the company.[55]

At Metal Box between 1906 and 1912 modern personnel management methods began to be adopted. During this period one week's holiday with pay became available, dependent on good time-keeping.[56] Even those with only one month's service could have four Bank Holidays off without loss of wages. Metal Box opened its own holiday and convalescent home for employees in 1911, offering "a rest and a change of air" for seven shillings a week.[57]

Once entitlement to paid leave was on the industrial and political agenda, the wording of some agreements still made it clear that a holiday with pay was not an automatic right but a privilege or concession related to good conduct. The Chemical Trade Joint Industrial Council in 1930, negotiated criteria for annual holidays.[58] A week's holiday with full pay was to be given to every worker who fulfilled conditions relating not only to continuity of employment since April 1929. It was also a requirement that "he must not have lost without reasonable excuse during that period more than five days (in the case of daymen) or six shifts (in the

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[55] Ibid, p261

[56] W J Reader, "Metal Box, A History", London, 1976, p29

[57] Reader, op cit, p30

[58] The Chemical Trade Joint Industrial Council, Regulations for the Workpeople's Annual Holiday in 1930, 19 December 1929, MSS 292/114, Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick

case of shiftmen)".[59] Additionally, "his work and conduct generally must have been satisfactory".[60] The timing of the period of leave was also to "be given at a time suitable to the convenience of the employer",[61] although every effort was to be made to give the holiday during the summer months. Even with payment for time off, chemical workers could still be financially disadvantaged as only the basic wage, exclusive of overtime, would be paid to them. If a worker were to leave the firm, either voluntarily or through dismissal, all entitlement to holidays qualified for, or payment in lieu of them, would be lost.

Even after the Holidays with Pay Act, some employers did not view paid leave as an automatic right. The South Wales and Monmouthshire Colliery Winding Enginemen's Association discussed at their conference in the summer of 1938, an offer from the mine owners of three pounds a week holiday pay.[62] A special conference was convened to discuss the offer, which contained a controversial clause insisted on by the owners as a condition for receiving the payment.[63] The employers were adamant that they "had the right to remove winding enginemen to fan engines, compressors or fitters' work on the surface during the cessation of work at any colliery owing to other workmen

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[59] Ibid

[60] Ibid

[61] Ibid

[62] South Wales and Monmouthshire Colliery Winding Enginemen's Association and Provident Trade Unions, Annual Conference Resolutions on the Offer of the Owners - Holidays With Pay £3, 11 June 1938, MSS 292/144

[63] South Wales and Monmouthshire Colliery Winding Enginemen's Association and Provident Trade Union, Special Conference - Holidays with Pay, Announcement, Agenda and Ticket, 28 June 1938, MSS 292/144

being away on holidays with pay".[64] The colliery enginemen refused to accept this. As explained by Tom Thomas, the General Secretary of the Association:

> The procedure of working one in place of another when on holidays would continue in the future as in the past. There are three enginemen employed at each enginehouse and when one is away on holiday the remaining two perform the work between them. …instructions were given to the winding enginemen "Where a colliery was forced to close down for the six days holidays, the winding enginemen were to perform the work of other workers who were away on holidays. The members naturally took great resentment to this as a direct break to trade unionism principles and decided under no circumstances would they do the work of other workmen. The owners according to their interpretation of Clause Seven of our Time Agreement, say they have the right to expect us to do other work. The Clause was agreed to in 1910 owing to a breakage of a winding engine and we have always held the opinion it was confined to something which might happen to the machinery we were working. They would then have the right to put us to something temporarily while the machinery was going under repair.[65]

Conference intructed every member to refuse to do the work of any workmen away under the principle of Holidays with Pay. According to the Union, the owners had made no

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[64] South Wales and Monmouthshire Colliery Winding Enginemen's Association, Annual Conference Resolutions, Op Cit

[65] T Thomas, Agent and General Secretary, South Wales and Monmouthshire Winding Enginemen's Association, Letter to Sir Walter Citrine of the TUC, Trehafod, 8 July 1938, MSS 292/144

mention of the need to cover for absent colleagues in their offer of paid holidays made on 23 May. This instruction was only given after the offer had been made. The employers' desire to use the holiday issue as a means of weakening trade union organisation failed with the union's refusal to concede to the demand that workers do each other's work in the case of absence, which could have been extended to other instances such as strikes. Before the Special Conference to reiterate the members determination not to do the work of others on holiday, the owners withdrew their offer of payment and also demanded the unconditional withdrawal of the circular issued to members instructing them not to obey the offending Clause.[66] The example of the South Wales Colliery Winding Enginemen shows the determination of one group of workers not to allow their employers to use the issue of holiday payment in exchange for the right to insist on unreasonable conditions of service or discipline, contrary to union principles.

As late as 1953 disciplinary processes were being linked to paid leave. Mander Brothers' workers received a maximum of two working weeks, provided that lost time did not exceed six normal working days.[67] For seven days' work lost, one week's holiday was forfeited, with another day lost for each additional day of absence beyond seven. Fortunately, what counted as working days lost was not too stringent. Certified sickness, unavoidable absence due to unforeseen circumstances or machine stoppage time were all excluded. A period of eight weeks sickness was

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[66] South Wales and Monmouthshire Winding Enginemen's Association, Circular on the Special Conference Resolution, 4 July 1938, MSS 292/114

[67] G le MM, "The History of Mander Brothers 1773-1953", London, 1953, p231

allowed before any reduction of holiday pay was made.[68] Few of Manders' employees would have failed to qualify for paid leave but the firm's conditions of employment emphasise that it was a privilege and not a right.

It was not so much the numbers of people receiving holidays with pay that was important as the acceptance of the principle. Pimlott, in 1947, argued that the preferential treatment of the salaried and a few black coated workers was resented by manual workers who seemed to have regarded pay without work as a contradiction in terms. "A man should be well paid for the time he is at work and lose time for holidays" the Sheffield Engine Drivers and Stokers Society told the 1894 Royal Commission on Labour, "a man that wants paying without working is a drone to his fellow men".[69] This and the following statements show how attitudes to paid time off had changed by the 1930s. George Potter of the London Working Men's Association told the Select Committee on the Sale of Liquors on Sunday Bill in 1868 that there should be less work on weekdays, and that instead of Sundays being spent in recreation there should be some sort of national holidays on which working people could enjoy a change of air, anticipating the Bank Holidays Act. Potter did not advocate that those holidays should be taken with payment. "I should anticipate that before these things are adopted a man will have more money for his labour, in order that he may be able to afford to lose his time".[70] Payment for not working was anathema and paid holidays had to be accepted into working-class culture as an antidote to summer shutdowns and layoffs. Some saw payment for holidays as an attack on their independence. The Royal Commission on Labour in 1894

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[68] Ibid, p232

[69] Pimlott, op cit, p156

[70] Ibid

reported no cases of trade unions asking for paid time-off but were concerned that in the textile industry people would go on strike in order to get a break.[71] These examples show that in the nineteenth century, paid leave was not a priority, having adequate income to cover necessities and then to allow savings to be made was.

By the early twentieth century, the attitude of manual workers towards those with paid holidays had changed, from the belief that the concession was unreasonable, to resentment that they were denied equality. A signalman's letter to the Great Central Railway's staff magazine in 1906 testified "it "bites" very hard to hear the office boy with a few months' service jubilantly assert that he is taking his six to ten days holiday with perhaps "passes" to any part of the country, whist men with five to forty-five years' service are limited to four days and passes over the Company's system only".[72]

Pimlott wrote that it was curious that the early initiatives seem to have come from the employers and that the lead was taken by public and semi-public concerns. These provide essential utilities and services and so it is not surprising that "bribes" were used to ensure good attendence and loyalty. It cannot be claimed, therefore, that holidays with pay came about because of concessions made by enlightened employers.[73] Where holidays with pay were available to some workers in the essential public utility industries the concession was a form of discipline, a reward for regular attendance and conduct acceptable to the employers, a privilege not a right. Absence from work could cost the privilege. The following cases show that it was workers organised in the

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[71] Report of the Royal Commission on Labour, 1894

[72] The Great Central Railway Journal, Vol II, No 4, October 1906, p107

[73] Oxford GNVQ Advanced Leisure and Tourism, OUP, 1996, p43

trade union movement that achieved them by their own efforts.

5.4 Work Hard, Play Later - Piece Rate Workers Ability to Earn More to Pay for Time-off

Although for the vast majority unpaid, holiday taking at certain times of year was officially sanctioned by the employers and the number and duration of days off increased through the nineteenth and early twentieth century. In the previous chapter, the extension of the wakes in Lancashire to a full week was noted.[74] This however was not universally welcome, especially amongst trades where workers did not earn enough to keep themselves in an acceptable manner at the best of times. The Sheffield Table Blade Grinders had to pay rent for their wheels during their break and so it was not particularly advantageous for them; Warrington Painters' Society objected not only to too many enforced holidays but said they could spare the bank holidays too.[75] These factors made unpaid breaks a labour and trade union movement issue. Prolonged time off was not a luxury but a threat to living standards, except for those workers who were able to have some control over production.

Lack of paid time off was obviously a disincentive to working-class tourism and holidaymaking but it did not prevent those who wanted to from taking a break, although holidays away and paid leave were two different matters. Ways and means of enjoying a rest from work could be found for the determined. As argued in the previous

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[74] S Jones, "The Lancashire Wakes, Holiday Savings and Holiday Pay in the Textile Districts", Eccles and District Local History Society, 1983, p29

[75] Pimlott. op cit, p151

chapter, workers in regular employment were able to save up for a few days off or even a trip away from home. Time off work, though, would not necessarily have led to a holiday away from home. The means employed to secure a break varied from industry to industry and according to local tradition. In mining, where payment for hewers was based on output, men would work harder to produce as much coal as possible in the week before a holiday. This was known as a "bull week" in which colliers would try to earn enough pay during the week preceding their holiday to cover the expenses for the week they had off work.[76]

Miners had a tradition of controlling the time spent at work; voluntary absenteeism was normal, especially during an upswing in the trade cycle. It was particularly noticeable among miners who had working wives and in periods of prosperity when hewers could earn enough to live on relatively easily.[77]

Booth in his London research of 1889, found that even amongst the poorest as well as the well paid workers unauthorised holidays were prevalent. He found it not uncommon for saddletree makers to go "on the booze" for weeks at a time. Pianoforte workers did not want to work all year round. Booth said, "Hard work and large earnings seceded by idleness and hard drinking make exactly the life that suits them".[78] He also noted that for some casual workers it was this spurious independence that compensated them for their precarious existence. Booth also related the case of the girls and women at the

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[76] Evidence of Sir Walter Citrine to the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, 1937, p44, paras 261-267

[77] John Benson; British Coalminers in the Nineteenth Century, Dublin 1980, pp56 and 57.

[78] Charles Booth, Life and Labour of the People of London IV, The Trades of East London Connected with Poverty, London, 1889 (1902 edition), 1969 reprint, p286

Victoria Match Factory where sixty per cent of them were absent for from a half to two and a half days per week.[79] This unreliability was mostly prevalent among those earning between eight and ten shillings. They seemed to be content with this income and preferred taking a holiday to earning more. What Booth does not take into account is the probable role of these women and girls in the family. In a large family their domestic labour in the home may have been of more value to the household than more money. In Barrow, Elizabeth Roberts found indications that not all young women were employed. Some worked for a short time then stopped or stayed at home to help with their families and then found a job again.[80]

By the 1890s almost all industries had secured the Saturday Half-holiday giving some discretionary time to the working class during the week other than Sundays.[81] Additionally the Bank Holidays Act of 1871, campaigned for mostly by Sir John Lubbock (later Lord Avebury), had made statutory provision for four holidays throughout the year as described in Chapter Four. The acceptance and enjoyment of Bank Holidays was just the first step towards longer annual holidays.

In 1842 the only recognised holidays in the pits were Christmas Day, Good Friday and a day or two at Whitsuntide. In South Wales, for some years prior to 1898, it was the practice for the men to take the first Monday in every month as a holiday, known as "St Mabon's Day" after a well known miners' leader of those days. This day was really taken for the purpose of holding

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[79] Charles Booth, Life and Labour of the People of London IV, op cit, p287

[80] Elizabeth Roberts, A Woman's Place - An Oral History of Working-class Women, 1890-1940, London , 1984, p39

[81] Royal Commission on Labour (Final Report), 1894

meetings for the discussion of issues affecting miners rather than as a holiday. Following the "Great Lockout of 1898, which ended in defeat for the weak miners' union after five months' of dispute over the "sliding scale" mechanism determining wages, the men returned to work on unfavourable terms.[82] The traditional "St Mabon's Day Holiday" was lost, although a coalfield wide union, the South Wales Miners' Federation, was born. As a final gesture Powell Duffry, the employer, prosecuted any of its workers who tried to observe the "holiday". As a result the company gained for itself the nickname "Poverty and Death" from its initials.[83] St Mabon's Day was formally abolished in the Coalfield Conciliation Board Agreement of 1905.[84] A legacy of this dispute was increasing militancy amongst members of the South Wales Miners' Federation. This organisation was one of those called upon to give evidence to the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay in 1937. The Miners' Next Step, a militant rank and file manifesto, was published in 1912 by the Unofficial Reform Committee of the Federation, in reaction to the conciliatory policies from 1900 onwards. Although this syndicalist group did not mention holidays, the programme's aim was that "Mankind shall have at last leisure and inclination to really live as men, and not as the beasts which perish".[85] The immediate steps towards this were eight shillings pay a day minimum wage and a seven hour working day.[86]

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[82] Andy Croll, "Coal Without Dole", History Today, Vol 49, No 2, February 1999, pp14-16, p14

[83] Ibid, p16

[84] Memorandum of Evidence by the South Wales Miners' Federation before the Select Committee on holidays with Pay, 1937, 10 Nov 1937, para 11

[85] The Miners' Next Step, published in 1912 by the Unofficial Reform Committee (Tonypandy), p33

[86] Miners' Next Step, op cit, p23

Nationally, the miners continued to uphold, and even extend, unpaid holidays. By World War One, Lord Kitchener had to appeal to miners to shorten their holidays by limiting the number of days taken at Easter and Whitsun.[87] The Miners' Federation of Great Britain supported his appeal. In Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, miners agreed with employers in March 1915 that all pits in the two counties should be closed on Good Friday, the following day (and presumably Easter Sunday) and work resumed on Easter Monday. At the Whitsuntide holiday they only took two days instead of the customary four or five.[88] The miners union representatives were not willing to give up too much free time and in April 1915 protested strongly against the growing amount of Sunday work "as being unnecessary and an encroachment upon a day which should be free from ordinary labour".[89]

The miners were not rewarded in peace time for the commitment they had given to the war effort and in February 1920 the employers refused a demand for a fortnight's holiday with pay which the Council of the Derbyshire Miners' Association had included with their pay claim.[90] The very few workmen who were able to take a couple of weeks continuous holiday were haunted by the spectre of being without pay to maintain their families for those weeks. When they returned to work they could not draw any pay until the second week after their return. Even in the 1930s, only a few piece workers on exceptionally high wages may have been able to take a week or two off in the summer and take their family away;

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[87] J E Williams, "The Derbyshire Miners", London, 1962, p64

[88] Ibid

[89] Ibid

[90] Ibid, p 628

but the great bulk of the miners could not do it because of the low wages they were getting.[91]

Miners' demands for holidays and more leisure time continued to meet with coal owners' resistance during the inter-war years. Miners were involved in other spare time pursuits such as the cinema and sport, which could lead to absenteeism. Charles Markham told the Samuel Commission "I find that far too much time is taken by the colliers in holidays. The average time worked by colliers when trade is good is only about 230 days a year".[92] The demand for holidays with pay in difficult times was seen by the owners as absurd. They believed it would put up the cost of coal, wages being the greatest cost at that time in coal production. In South Wales, the unpaid holidays were taken at various times of year, three days at Easter, three at Whitsun, three in August, two at Christmas and one day for the miners' demonstration. These arrangements were not deemed to be very satisfactory because of the lack of payment. The South Wales Miners' Federation proposed in 1934 that they should have these twelve days' holiday in the year including a week in August on the minimum rate of pay for the grade on which a man is employed. This provoked the answer by the spokesman for the owners:

> One can only regard this proposal of yours as far too Utopian to be within the range of practical politics so far as we in this coalfield, or any other coalfield in the country, are concerned.[93]

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[91] Evidence Before the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, 1937, para 4175

[92] Williams, op cit, p791

[93] Evidence of the South Wales Miners' Federation before the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, 1937, para 14

5.5 Contributory Holiday Savings Schemes

Some groups of workers took part in contributory schemes where, with the help of the employer, they put aside a small sum each week to which the employer made an additional contribution. In the previous chapter, voluntary savings clubs, organised by workers themselves, were described. This section is concerned with schemes promoted and run by employers as part of the conditions of work. These works administered funds paid out at holiday time to compensate the worker for the loss of earnings and to help towards holiday costs. Examples of these schemes existed in the mining, boot and shoe and building industries.

In June 1936 the Bolsover Colliery Company began a scheme of closing the pits for a week in the summer and giving the miners gifts to enable them to enjoy a holiday. As the payments were gifts and the employer had closed down the colliery, the miners could also claim unemployment benefit. The Company paid the men from a fund to which the miners themselves contributed the majority of the money, owners and men subscribing to it in the ratio 15:85. Married men over twenty-one received three pounds from the fund, younger married men two pounds, single men one pound ten shillings and a pound was given to boys under eighteen. The employer's contribution to the fund was treated as a cost of production other than wages.[94] The Durham Miners' Association at that time had a similar savings scheme,[95] as did mineworkers in Nottinghamshire where the employers again subsidised the fund by fifteen

[94] Derbyshire Times, 5 November, 1937

[95] Letter from John Swann of the Durham Miners' Association to Walter Citrine, 24 February 1938, MSS 292 114/2 1926-33, Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick

per cent.[96] To describe these savings systems as an arrangement for holidays with pay, however is a misnomer as eighty-five per cent of the money was contributed by the miners themselves. What appears to have made it an attractive proposition to the miners was the added bonus of unemployment benefit paid on top of the payment from the scheme. For this reason the Derbyshire Miners' Association attempted to use this example in its negotiations in 1937 which they hoped would be approved by the Ministry of Labour.[97] However, a number of test cases countering the unemployed status were brought before Courts of Referees in the summer of 1938, some of which were successful.[98] The Association argued the scheme was for holiday savings since the men contributed eighty-five per cent of the money. On 30 July the Council of the Association decided that in all future circulars they should not write of "holidays with pay" but of the "Holiday Savings Scheme". It was ruled though that the men were getting deferred wages and therefore were not entitled to unemployment benefits during their holiday. In view of this decision five branches passed resolutions to discontinue it. Three others favoured a protest in the House of Commons and an attempt to get the decision reversed. By the end of October thirty branches had voted in favour of retaining the scheme with twenty-eight against. In view of the small majority in favour of its continuance, it was decided to hold promotional meetings explaining to the branches its benefits. In January 1939 there were forty-two branches in favour of it compared with only eighteen against. The Council voted

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[96] Mentioned in a letter from Herbert Smith, President of the Yorkshire Mineworkers' Association to Walter Citrine, 1 February 1938, MSS 292 114/2, Modern Records Centre

[97] Williams, op cit, p792

[98] Ibid; Letter from L J Bush, Secretary, Oxford Trades and Labour Council, to Sir W Citrine, TUC, 30 August 1938, MSS 292/114/3, Modern Records Centre

by forty-three votes to eight in favour of the recommendation of the Executive Committee, that the scheme be continued and the payments increased from 1940 to four pounds for married men, three pounds to single men over eighteen and one pound ten shillings to single men under eighteen.[99] In April 1938, the Council had decided that the Miners' Association should pay unemployment benefit to members during their holiday week as an extra payment to that of the fund.[100]

When questioned before the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay in 1937, the South Wales Miners' Federation representatives were not in favour of such a scheme being implemented in Wales even with government subsidy as the miners' contribution would have to come out of the wages, leaving the miner no better off.[101]

A development of the Derbyshire scheme was the building of the Derbyshire Miners' Holiday Camp at Skegness. This was paid for by a grant of £40,000 from the Miners' Welfare Fund and by various contributions from the coal-owners.[102] The Chairman of the Miners' Welfare Central Committee, Sir Frederick Sykes opened it, on 20 May 1939. The Centre could accommodate almost a thousand visitors in chalets with meals taken in a large communal dining hall.[103] Negotiations with the railway companies led to the arrangement of cheap fares from Derbyshire to Skegness. This was the first such scheme of its kind in

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[99] Ibid

[100] Ibid

[101] Evidence before the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, para 4180-4181

[102] Donald Chapman, "Holidays and the State", Fabian Society, London, 1949, p16

[103] Colin Ward and Dennis Hardy, "Goodnight Campers", London, 1984, p40

the country and enabled many miners and their families to have a week's holiday by the sea for the first time.[104]

This facilitation of holidays was still made without any genuine agreement for paid time off. All agreements were local ones operative only in the individual coalfields. Some areas had agreements for paid holidays for particular categories of the workforce. The Cannock Chase Coal Owners' Association and the local Deputies Association, agreed in 1922, to commence in 1923, "a week's holiday with wages to be given each year, subject to arrangements to suit the management",[105] to firemen and deputies. The Cumberland Coke Trade Conciliation Board agreed that May Day was "to be recognised in lieu of the Miners' Demonstration Day as being one of the days in respect of which the payment of an extra quarter of a shift for work done on such days is applicable, provided a Demonstration is actually held on May Day and that subject to such proviso, the extra payment should operate as from May Day 1925".[106]

The South Derbyshire and District Colliery Owners Association and the Leicestershire Coal Owners' Association agreed that "the claim of the National Association of Colliery Deputies and the Midland Mining Officials Association for a week's holiday in the year with wages is sustained to take effect from the year commencing August 1927".[107] It was not until the nationalisation of the industry that a national negotiating mechanism was established together with collective bargaining covering all coalfields and all

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[104] Williams, op cit, p629

[105] Handwritten, unattributed document with the heading "Holidays" in the TUC Archive, c1927, MSS 292/114

[106] Ibid

[107] Ibid

categories of employee. Until then pay and conditions were negotiated with the individual employers and standards varied according to proximity to industrial centres, geological conditions and availability of alternative employment. In some mining districts, as already mentioned, there were more opportunities for paid work for women which could improve overall family income, making taking breaks from work more likely and acceptable.[108]

In the Second World War miners, along with all other sections of the workforce, were once more asked to sacrifice holidays and absenteeism was not allowed. The government decreed that on the railways the customary summer holiday could be taken as long as it did not exceed a week. These holidays need not necessarily have been at the usual times and travel had to be reduced to a minimum.[109] Absenteeism, which could have threatened war production, led to the prosecution in 1940 of a Chesterfield miner.[110] Shortages of skilled labour caused a decline in output and bonuses were introduced to encourage regular attendance.

As part of a post-war recruitment campaign, the National Union of Mineworkers, in anticipation of a nationalised industry, in 1946 publicised the Miners' Charter. Point Eight of the Charter called for payment to be made for two consecutive weeks' holiday and six statutory days in

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[108] Andrew Walker, "Pleasurable Homes? Victorian Model Miners' Wives and the Family Wage in a 19th Century South Yorkshire Colliery District", Women's History Review, Vol 6, No 3, 1997, pp 317-336, p317

[109] London Midland and Southern Railway Magazine, Vol 1, No 10, August 1941, p403

[110] Williams, op cit, p630

each year.[111] In December 1946, a special conference heard from Horner, the general secretary, "we have found both in Coal Board and governmental circles a readiness to accept all twelve points of the Charter in principle".[112] The Coal Board's acceptance of the point calling for paid holidays, led to the end of the miners' contributory schemes, which were no longer needed.

The Boot and Shoe industry was another area of employment where breaks could be taken with the aid of payment from a contributory scheme. Holidays with pay had been a demand of the Boot and Shoe Union since 1914 when its conference passed a resolution from Leicester One branch, which called for equality with staff who had seven days' leave with pay and payment for bank holidays.[113] Until such a claim was secured it was entered as an aim of the union. Although unanimously carried the idea was so new it was treated with amused derision by the trade papers.[114] Changes to previous conventions and values which came during the First World War allowed the claim for holidays to become more realistic. By the middle of the war some shoe operatives were receiving them at half pay.[115] The co-operative movement pioneered holidays with pay and in 1918 the CWS Wheatsheaf Works in Leicester gave its employees with twelve months service six days' paid leave a year.[116]

In May 1918 another shoe manufacturer, Bostock and Company, also in Leicester, circulated details of a

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[111] R Page Arnot, "The Mines - One Union, One Industry", London, 1979, p126

[112] R Page Arnot, op cit, p197

[113] Alan Fox, "A History of the Natioanl Union of Boot and Shoe Operatives", Oxford, 1958, p408

[114] Alan Fox, op cit, p408

[115] Ibid, p408

[116] Ibid, p409

contributory holiday saving scheme, which they were introducing. In this, operatives contributed fourpence per week or a multiple thereof. For every fourpence saved the firm would add a further penny. This, like that of the miners, was a savings scheme rather than a system of providing holidays with pay as eighty per cent of the fund came from the workers themselves.

During the boom in the immediate post-World War One period, the industry's Joint Industrial Council (JIC) drew up a holiday savings scheme. The JIC adopted the scheme, which they recommended to all employees in the industry in 1919. The employer paid into a Holiday Savings Fund an annual sum equal to the worker's minimum weekly wage.[117] The worker was to make the same contribution in weekly instalments. The fund created was equal to two weeks minimum wages from which the worker could draw fixed amounts at Easter, Whitsun, August and Christmas. This system was widely adopted although there were some employers who gave a week's holiday with pay without the operatives' contributions to save clerical expense.[118] The JIC agreed to increase the contributions of both sides of the industry equally after the Bank Holiday of August 1929, and therefore paying out a greater amount to beneficiaries.

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[117] National Joint Industrial Council for the Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Trade and National Conference (September 1928) Agreement, Holiday Provision Scheme, July 1929, MSS 292/144

[118] Fox, op cit, p409

1 - Weekly contributions after August Bank Holiday, 1929, will be-

	Men (over 21)	Youths (18-21) & Women (over 20)	Boys (16-18) Girls (16-20)
Employer	1s 2d	8d	4d
Operative	1s 2d	8d	4d

2 - Withdrawals for the following amounts after the dates shown if factory closed or usual holidays (3 days after Easter and Whitsun; 1 week christmas and August):

Holiday	Men	Youths & Women	Boys & Girls
Wed, 25 Dec 1929	40s	20s	10s
Mon, 21 April 1930	16s	12s	6s
Mon, 9 June 1930	16s	12s	6s
Mon, 4 August 1930	40s	20s	10s

And requiring the following credit balances to be left:

Dec 1929	4s 4d	5s 4d	2s 8d
Easter 1930	25s 8d	14s 8d	7s 4d
Whitsun 1930	23s 8d	10s 8d	5s 4d
August 1930	---	---	---

[119]

If an employee was absent through illness and could not pay his or her share, the employer was not obliged to make any contribution. On returning to work, workers could make up any arrears for four weeks. Operatives had to agree to the deduction of their contributions from their wages. The money was paid into a "Holiday Provision Account" held at a bank, controlled by a Management Committee of not less than two, half its members representing the employer and half the operatives.[120] This scheme was operational until it was superseded by non-contributory holidays with pay in 1947.

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[119] Table taken from National JIC for the Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Trade and National Conference, (September 1928), Agreement, op cit

[120] National JIC for the Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Trade and National Conference, September 1928, Agreement, op cit

However, not all firms adopted or welcomed the idea, and in 1935 at W and C Wills of Hinckley a strike occurred as a result of the employers reneging on an agreement made between union officials and the firm in June of that year. The Leicester Mercury reported that the firm should have paid the operatives holiday pay accumulated in the period between Whitsun and the August break without any collection of contributions to be made from the workers themselves.[121] The workers would be responsible for making up their own portion of the contributions. When August and holiday time came around no holiday money was forthcoming. The ensuing strike was quickly victorious due to W and C Wills' full order book. The employer's share of the holiday pay was paid out at once with the assurance of no victimisations or wage reductions for the strikers.[122]

5.6 Early Collective Bargaining

Workers' efforts from around the turn of the twentieth century secured an acknowledgement of the right to a holiday through the collective bargaining process. The evidences produced in front of the Select Committee show a wide range of holiday traditions and uses. Within the textile industry, holidays had long been the subject of collective agreements. Textile and other workers in Lancashire, it has already been noted, would go on strike or collectively leave off work in order to celebrate the wakes. In April of 1848, the Mason's corresponding secretary was sent to Stalybridge, where a strike was in progress, after a bill for fifty-five pounds had arrived from the local pub, the Moulders' Arms.

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[121] Leicester Mercury, 17 August, 1935

[122] Leicester Mercury, 20 August, 1935

> On his arrival he found out that the scene of action for the previous fortnight had been something like a wakes or a fair instead of a strike, to the utter disgrace of the officers of the lodge. The landlord had been so simple as to allow customers money, meat and drink in abundance under the idea of keeping unprincipled rascals from working.[123]

The expenses had been charged to the fund for unemployed tramping artisans, showing the link between the collectively enforced holiday in the textile areas and industrial action as a means of acquiring it, not just by workers in the cotton mills but in other occupations within those communities.

Textile workers in Blackburn were trying to extend their annual holiday to two days in 1850, which they succeeded in doing thanks to collective bargaining. The Blackburn Standard newspaper of 3 July 1850, reported that:

> A delegation from the operative classes (appointed at a meeting of delegates from all Friendly Societies) waited upon the principal employers to request that the annual holiday in July this year be extended to two days instead of one as heretofore. It has been unanimously agreed by the latter that the holiday this year shall be two days, an indulgence for which the operatives and others have warmly expressed their thanks.[124]

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[123] R A Leeson, Travelling Brothers, London, 1979, p218

[124] Blackburn Standard, 3 July 1850 quoted by Morris Brooke Smith, The Growth and Development of Popular Entertainment and Pastimes in the Lancashire Cotton Towns, 1830-1870, MLitt Dissertation, University of Lancaster, 1970, p 188

Following a successful wage campaign by spinners in the Cotton Workers' Association (CWA) in 1890, the cardroom workers' leaders approached them with a view to amalgamation, which happened in 1893.[125] This new organisation presented a threat to the employers and when the Bolton Masters' Association together with employers in other towns refused to improve holiday arrangements the spinners took them unilaterally.[126] The union was in a strong position with a number of strikes taking place over cleaning and the behaviour of over-lookers, which were well supported in even the weaker areas. A closed shop was introduced as workers refused to work with non-union members. Lancashire weavers in December 1906, were covered by a purely local county agreement made at a meeting of representatives of the Cotton Employers' Parliamentary Association and the United Textile Factory Workers' Association. This agreement provided for holidays equivalent to one hundred and sixteen and a half working hours, equivalent to eleven and a half days a year and came into force in 1907.[127] In November 1913 a joint meeting with two employers associations discussed a request to increase the holiday hours from one hundred and sixteen and a half to one hundred and thirty-six and a half hours a year but without success. Three months later, in February 1914, another meeting was held and the employers agreed to ballot their members. The result was in favour of the extension of the holidays and in June 1914 the employers intimated their agreement with the application and holidays were fixed at a hundred and thirty-six and a half a year. These hours were based on

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[125] Alan Fowler and Terry Wyke, "The Barefoot Aristocrats" Littleborough, 1987, p100

[126] Ibid

[127] Edwin Hopwood; A History of the Lancashire Cotton Industry and the Amalgamated Weaver's Association, Manchester, 1969, p124

a ten hour working day, the effective annual holiday period was therefore thirteen and a half days.[128]

Year	Hours Off	Days Off
1907	116.5	11.5
1914	136.5	13.5

Table showing increase in holidays in Lancashire cotton factories, between 1907 and 1914.[129]

This was still the arrangement when the Federation of Master Cotton Spinners Associations presented its evidence before the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay in October 1937. The timing of the holidays was arranged so as to give three days at Easter (Good Friday, Saturday and Easter Monday), three days at Whitsuntide (Whit Friday, Whit Saturday and Whit Monday), a Saturday in July and a complete cessation of work on the Friday before Wakes Week until the Monday after (five full days plus two half days).[130] Although no payment was made for the holiday period, the employers' representatives told the Committee that it had always "been understood that the earnings of the workers in fifty weeks allow ample provision for holidays".[131] In the Workmen's Compensation Acts it was recognised that holidays were a "normal incident of employment in that, for the purpose of computing compensation, workers' annual earnings are divided by fifty-two".[132] The TUC giving evidence to the Select Committee on behalf of the textile trades unions, disputed this claim and stated quite emphatically that

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[128] Ibid, p124

[129] Edwin Hopwood, op cit, p23

[130] Fred Mills, Evidence Before the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, 5 October 1937, p128, para 1344

[131] Ibid

[132] Memorandum of Evidence by the Federation of Master Cotton Spinners' Associations Ltd, taken before the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, October, 1937, p123, para 6

"never in those industries have collective negotiations or agreements either explicitly or implicitly recognised that holidays have to be provided for out of the earnings of the weeks of employment".[133]

In the textile towns of Yorkshire and Lancashire the taking of an annual holiday was a local tradition. Mills would stop production entirely; whole towns closed down during their wakes week, not just in the textile trades but in other occupations as well. Fred Mills of the Federation of Master Cotton Spinners Associations told the Select Committee in 1937 that he remembered that the tradition was well established fifty years back. The rota list of wakes weeks for the different towns had certainly been in operation for more than fifty years.[134] The workers did not suffer financial hardship as a result of these closures because they made use of savings schemes to which they contributed throughout the year. Sir John Grey, chairman of the Cotton Spinners' and Manufacturers' Association, in his evidence referred to the special financial arrangements for the annual wakes holidays by means of weekly contributions to Holiday Clubs, run by political, religious or other bodies, the mills where they are employed, Savings Banks and similar institutions.[135] These savings clubs are discussed in the previous chapter.

The textile operatives were satisfied with the existing arrangements, according to the claims submitted in evidence by employers to the Select Committee.[136] These

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[133] Sir Walter Citrine, Memorandum of Supplementary Evidence By the General Council of the Trades Union Congress to the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, p403, para 5200

[134] Fred Mills, Evidence Before the Select Committee on Holiday s with Pay, 1937, p125, para 1246

[135] Sir John Grey, ibid, p130, para 4

[136] Ibid

allowed them to save voluntarily if they so wished, however as the mills tended to close down completely during wakes weeks, saving was a neccessity and not really a choice. The tenuous evidence for this was the claim that there had been no demands for paid holidays so far as they were aware.[137] They argued that the workers were well able to afford to pay for the time off themselves and cover the additional cost of their holiday. Sir John Grey gave as an example the case of some weavers who, in the summer of 1937, caused a shortage of labour because they not only wanted the wakes week holiday but a second week too, so as to have a fortnight's holiday without pay, for which they personally had made provision.[138]

Paradoxically, Sir John could not envisage the workers welcoming a compulsory system in which deductions should be made from weekly wages in order to provide a fund for holidays, should that have been the form a legislative solution was to take. They had their own schemes which were purely voluntary and it seemed that out of a surplus of earnings (average pay 35s 6d) the workers were able to put by money.[139] If a surplus could not be earned in order to realise the joy of a holiday the workers were willing to make sacrifices week to week and go without certain necessities in order to enjoy it. When this proposition was put by the Committee to the Wool and Allied Textile Employers Council, the answer given in evidence as to the former assertion made by employers' representatives, was that "they did not think textile workers went without necessities as they did not notice them walking about

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[137] Ibid

[138] Ibid, p132, para 1436

[139] Ibid, see also Sir Walter Citrine's Evidence Before the Select Committee, p47, para 303

miserable saving up for their holidays".[140] It seemed to the employers, that holidaymakers put by a good deal more than a week's wages towards their holiday at the seaside because they looked well-dressed, seemed to have plenty to spend and came back to tell what a grand time they had had. These assertions by the employers were purely supposition, with no hard evidence offered in support.

This supposition also fails to take into account the psychological effects of a holiday, that its anticipation can provide a source of contentment and pleasure throughout the planning period. As Sir Walter Citrine in his own evidence to the Committee on behalf of the TUC said, this "is the real danger of thrift, the employers count it up and use it as evidence against the workmen".[141] This claim of relative affluence amongst textile workers was refuted by the evidence the TUC submitted to the Select Committee. It was impossible to believe from the weekly earnings figures of the workpeople, on average 35 shillings and six pence,[142] that normal earnings were enough to enable work people in many of the large industries of this country - especially those in the cotton, woollen and coal industries - to save in the course of even a reasonably good year's employment, enough to enable them to take a sufficiently protracted and attractive holiday.[143] Of the savings clubs, the TUC said the evidence of the employers' representative was misleading to people who might not have realised that Lancashire people saved in holiday

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[140] Minutes of Evidence given before the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay by the Wool (& Allied) Textile Employers Council, 1937, p137, para 1552

[141] Sir Walter Citrine, Minutes of Evidence before the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, 1937, p47, para 303

[142] Ibid

[143] Memorandum of Supplementary Evidence by the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, 1937, p349, para 36

clubs to provide not only for holidays but for clothes, furniture and old age.

Some clubs even provided borrowing facilities. This implied that rather than having money left for saving for holidays after paying for the necessities of life, the clubs were being used as a means for low paid workers to obtain essentials.[144] In textile work, where women often worked full-time after marriage, economic necessity rather than a desire for luxuries was the usual motivation. Men's wages were often low compared to those in other areas, which encouraged married women to work, thereby meeting the demands of the labour market for female labour. The lives of women workers, and so by implication the rest of the family, were stressful and demanding in the extreme. "It was bed and work all the time" was a common complaint.[145] Housework had somehow to be fitted in before work which started at 6.00 am, after work which finished at 6.30 pm and at the weekends, involving the whole family in a ceaseless round of toil. In these circumstances, it is no wonder that textile communities valued the change in routine, fun and relaxation of the wakes so much and that they went on to develop collective methods of ensuring a holiday and having the means to pay for it.

Any payment for holidays could only come out of the overall amount allocated in the industry, the Committee was told, if it was granted then wage rises would just be less.[146] It would spread the same amount over fifty-two weeks instead of fifty. In all negotiations with the

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[144] Ibid

[145] Elizabeth Roberts, A Woman's Place, op cit, p143

[146] Memorandum of Evidence by the Allied Association of Bleachers, Dyers, Printer and Finishers to the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, 1937, p139, para 7

trades unions, the memorandum of evidence stated that "Whenever negotiations have taken place on the question of wages the fact that no payment is made for holidays has been taken into account".[147] The Bleachers' Association representative did seem to acknowledge that the unions were interested in gaining payment for their holidays in previous negotiations associated with other conditions. This was not granted but the final agreement took into consideration the fact that the demand had been made but it had not been possible for the employers to grant it.[148]

The statements made to the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay by employers' organisations, not unexpectedly, do not tally with descriptions given on behalf of the trade unions. In their history of the cotton trade workers, Alan Fowler and Terry Wyke say, regarding the granting of the first paid holidays in the trade in 1941 after three years of bargaining against employer resistance,

> That at last Wakes Week could be enjoyed with less worry about the cost to the family budget. The absence of paid holidays had been the reason why some operatives, especially big piecers, had spent their holidays at home, in some cases working in nearby towns whose own Wakes Week came at a different time.[149]

This contradicts the employers' evidence given above as to the universality and popularity of the existing scheme of workers saving for their own holiday. Some of them

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[147] Ibid

[148] Ibid, p142, para 1649

[149] Alan Fowler and Terry Wyke eds; The Barefoot Aristocrats, Littleborough, 1987, p101

either could not afford to do so or else resented the shutdown and went to work temporarily elsewhere. Again, Edwin Hopwood in his history of the Amalgamated Weavers' Society states that for many years the subject of holidays with pay was discussed by delegates to the Annual Conference of the United Textile Factory Workers' Association, with a faint hope that some day the textile workers would achieve their object. It was only in 1938, after the Holidays with Pay Act, that they saw any chance of realising their desire. Only then, he says, would members (of the UTFWA) be able to take their holidays without the accompanying dread of the shortage of income, which usually followed the annual holiday.[150] This fear of holidays by the low paid, as a form of unpaid lay-off, was expressed by the fictional characters in Robert Tressell's novel "The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists", set in the painting and decorating trade in 1906.

> Just before Easter several of the men asked... if they might be allowed to work on Good Friday and Easter Monday, as, they said, they had had enough holidays during the winter (when they were laid-off); they had no money to spare for holidaymaking and they did not wish to lose two days' pay when there was work to be done.[151]

They were told there was not sufficient work in to justify the request as things were getting slack again and so work ceased from Thursday night until Tuesday morning. Easter, for Tressell's characters, was described as the occasion of "much cursing and blaspheming on the part of those whose penniless, poverty-stricken condition it helped to aggravate by

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[150] Hopwood, op cit, p124

[151] Robert Tressell,The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists, London, 1965, p371

enforcing unprofitable idleness, which they lacked the means to enjoy".[152]

Despite being in favour of holidays with pay for their members, not all trade unionists were willing to allow state legislation to interfere with the collective bargaining process. Whether or not they favoured payment for holidays as a means of securing an additional wage rise rather than as a principle in itself is hard to judge although the effect would turn out to be the same as extra pay. Not all workers were in agreement with the proposal for paid holidays. The main ideological difference would have been that a wage rise would allow the worker to decide whether or not to have a break from work. If a person chose, high wages would enable regular savings to be made to pay for it. A paid holiday would remove the element of choice from the worker who would have to forsake a pay rise to pay for it. This was seen as a form of compulsory savings to pay for a holiday. It would remove the worker's autonomy to choose how to spend his or her own money if an enforced annual shutdown or cessation of work had to be paid for by the sacrifice of a pay rise. Most people came to receive a paid holiday through voluntary collective agreements rather than through legislation.[153]

Turning now to those organised trades where union activity secured paid holidays through the collective bargaining process prior to the Holidays with Pay Act, it can be seen when compared with the examples described above, that these advances reflect the relative strengths of the industries in the economy as a whole, as well as the level of trade union organisation.

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[152] Ibid

[153] Stephen G Jones, Workers at Play, London, 1986, p19

The printing trades are an example of well organised, skilled workers who managed to negotiate paid holidays for their members at a relatively early date. The Typographical Association union representing skilled workers had been very strong since the 1850s, when trade was booming and prices rising.[154] It won successive wage rises and hours reductions. In 1859-61 several branches tried to get a nine hour day or 54 hour week plus a Saturday half-holiday but were not successful. This campaign to secure more free time for workers was promoted as beneficial not just to the individual worker but to the employer as well. The union said that great advantages would accrue therefrom:

> Domestic enjoyment would be increased and mental culture greatly promoted. There would be an improvement in health and a diminution in the mortality of printers due to the increased opportunities for physical recreation.[155]

This moralistic language was typical of that used by campaigners in the mid-nineteenth century. It was emphasised that employers would benefit from the improved health and energies of their workmen. However, the 1860s were not a good time for this kind of campaign and in 1864 wages and hours had been virtually unchanged for over half a century. The right to have leisure time focusing on hours of work was an issue throughout the rest of the century. However the Saturday Half-holiday had been achieved by the 1870s.[156] In 1891 the Manchester branch secured an annual week's holiday with pay for all compositors on newspapers as part of a settlement on

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[154] A E Musson, The Typographical Association - Origins and History up to 1949, London, 1954, p156

[155] Ibid

[156] Ibid, p160

wages and hours. Many employers had already granted an annual week's holiday with pay to their workmen by this time.[157]

In 1904 holidays were still an issue. A strike by NATSOPA[158] members at Spottiswood and Company in London, was held over the proper rate of pay for bank holiday working. It was expensive to the union but in the end resulted in victory.[159] An example of the organisational strength of pre-First World War organisation was a strike over hours of work calling for a reduction from fifty-two and a half to fifty hours per week in 1911. This dispute was sustained for twenty weeks with ninety per cent of the London membership participating.[160] A delegate meeting of the Typographical Association in 1913 expressed disfavour with the agreement of 1911, which had secured a working week of fifty-one hours. This conference passed resolutions calling not only for a forty-eight hour week but also holidays with pay. The outbreak of the First World War prevented any progress being made along these lines but the demands became union policy and set the precedent for the post-war settlement.[161]

5.7 Towards National Agreements After World War I

Until 1918, conditions of employment tended to be set through local agreements but the First World War brought a move towards national agreements and a standardisation of conditions throughout large scale industry. During the short post-war boom the Printing and Kindred Trades

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[157] Ibid, p163

[158] ie National Society of Printers Assistants

[159] R B Suthers; The Story of NATSOPA, London, 1929, p1

[160] Musson, op cit, p167

[161] Musson, op cit, p163

Federation (PKTF) negotiated the Hours and Holidays Agreement which applied across the different graphical trades. This agreement laid down the length of the standard working week at forty-eight hours in all departments. It secured piece rate rises of five per cent and at least six days in each year were to be National Holidays. If a worker was required to work on a bank holiday extra pay was required plus an additional day's holiday with pay had to be given at a later date. Additionally, one week's paid holiday was to be taken between 31 March and 30 September paid for at the ordinary "stab" rate[162] for the week or the average weekly earnings of the preceding six months for piece workers.[163] This applied to those with over twelve month's service. If a person left their job then an additional day's pay for every two months' work done since the preceding 30 June was paid, this was the basis for calculating holiday pay. This was codified in the 1919 National Hours and Holidays Agreement between the print unions and the employers.[164] Holidays with pay were also granted on Christmas Day, Boxing Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Whit Monday and the first Monday in August. If it was necessary for people to work, they would have been paid at time and a half rate for bank holidays or double time on Christmas Day plus an extra day off.

Daily newspaper hands were excluded and they threatened to strike. In response, they were granted a half day off per week if they worked on evening papers, or a full day off every fortnight if they worked on morning ones.[165] As

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[162] 'Stab rate, ie rate of pay for established print workers paid by measured day work rather than for the amount produced which is known as piece work.

[163] John Child, Industrial Relations in the British Printing Industry, London, 1967, p228

[164] Ibid

[165] Musson, op cit, pp329 and 334

a result of this agreement and the ensuing increase in confidence in the workers'organisations, union membership rose for PKTF affiliates from 75,000 in 1914 to 190,000 in 1920.[166]

During the 1930s there were more campaigns for reduced hours but the PKTF did nothing but pass resolutions (probably because of the depression and the resulting weakening of union organisation) until 1935. Then improvements in trade allowed stronger action to be taken and after prolonged negotiation and a threatened strike came the 1937 Hours and Holidays Agreement which reduced working hours to thirty-five per week.[167] The unions of the PKTF had been arguing for a fortnight's holiday on the grounds that workers should share the benefits of increased production and that they needed longer holidays for health reasons owing to increased speed of production and mechanisation in the industry.[168] No further gains were made regarding time off until after the Second World War, although War Agreement Number Eight ruled out any collective increases in wages, it did not preclude an approach to employers regarding reduced working hours and holidays for which there was growing pressure in all unions.

The railways were another example of how well organised unions could secure better working conditions, including holidays, for their members. As mentioned previously, the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants (ASRS) had secured a nine hour day and on the Great Northern Railway, three day's paid holidays for those employees with over a year's service in 1872.[169] In 1890 on the

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[166] Child, op cit, p229

[167] Musson, op cit, p375

[168] Ibid

[169] Philip S Bagwell; The Railwaymen, London, 1963, pp 66 -67

London North Western Passenger Railway, "a great proportion" of the men received a week's holiday with pay, but it was emphasised that this was not as of right but was a discretionary reward in return for good conduct.[170] In 1897, Pilot Guards with the London North Western Railway secured an eight hour day and a week's holiday with pay for passenger guards, brakesmen and signalmen with five year's service.[171] As already discussed, conditions of service were not uniform across the different rail companies or for all trades. Not every railway servant was able to take advantage of a holiday in summer, which was judged to be the appropriate time.[172]

In 1917 a conference held in Leicester on 17 November to discuss "After War Matters", formulated a demand for a fourteen days' holiday with pay.[173] With the coming of peace with so many industrial disputes taking place after the ban on industrial action during the war, Andrew Bonar Law (deputising for Lloyd George) agreed to make concessions to the railwaymen as the government couldn't afford a showdown with them owing to volatile negotiations which were also going on with the miners. Bonar Law agreed to guaranteed pay for a guaranteed working week, standardisation of pay upwards, a week's holiday with pay after one year's service and extra pay for night and Sunday working.[174] This was an important recognition that workers had a right to set periods of leisure time.

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[170] Pimlott, op cit, p155

[171] Bagwell, op cit, p180

[172] The Great Central Railway Journal, Vol II, No 4, October 1906, pp106-107 and Vol II, No 10, April 1907, p312

[173] Bagwell, op cit, pp 370 - 371

[174] Bagwell, op cit, p379

These terms however were not offered to members of the National Union of Railwaymen (NUR), as the government seemed to be attempting to use divide and rule tactics in order to provoke a strike. In fact the offer to the NUR would have left them considerably worse off with cuts ranging from one to sixteen shillings a week from their pay packets.[175] Lloyd George and the Government wanted a sectional strike as they believed they could crush it and teach the unions a lesson after the momentous victory won by the Amalgamated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF).[176] They also wanted to put an end to the industrial crisis when strikes were widespread in a number of industries, including textiles and the police.

The government prepared well for the showdown, troops were called out, alternative transport had been arranged and local authorities were asked to enrol a citizens' guard.[177] The NUR's funds were locked up in securities and they were totally unprepared for industrial action. They pleaded with the prime minister for more time to negotiate but were forced to take strike action.[178]

> Nothing it seemed had been overlooked to make certain that the NUR would be routed and trade unionism taught a badly needed lesson. But in fact one thing had been overlooked - an intangible quality which Mr Lloyd George and his colleagues were incapable of understanding - the solidarity of the industrial workers in crisis.[179]

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[175] Ibid

[176] A L Morton and George Tate, The British Labour Movement, London, 1956, p282

[177] Ibid

[178] ASLEF 1880-1980, ASLEF Union publication, 1980, p30

[179] Francis Williams, quoted in ASLEF 1880-1980, p30

The strike was victorious after just a week, the cuts were abandoned and the agreement extended to cover all sections of the railway employees. They had won because of the overwhelming solidarity shown by the rest of the labour movement. ASLEF, which had not been bought off by their own settlement, came out in support and the co-operative movement had immediately made food and supplies available to the strikers.[180] This proved to be the last major victory for the trade union movement of the immediate post-war period. This did not satisfy all the members and on 3 July 1919 two unions, the Railway Clerks' Association (RCA) and the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, met and agreed a programme of demands including a thirty-eight hour week, twenty-one day's paid holiday a year and double pay for work on public holidays. Although this led to some gains being made on wages there were none made on holidays[181] for several years.

The campaign continued and in 1924 the all-grades programme demanded amongst other improvements regarding pay, a six hour day for men in more arduous work and twelve days' paid holiday instead of six for all grades of worker.[182] Incidentally, a week's holiday with pay had been won in Ireland for NUR and ASLEF workers after long and hard fought negotiations on 17 February 1922.[183] In 1927, the Railway Clerks' Association was able to write to the TUC informing Congress they had secured two weeks' paid holiday.[184]

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[180] Morton and Tate, op cit, p 282

[181] Bagwell, op cit, p380

[182] Ibid, p441

[183] Ibid, p448

[184] Letter from Railway Clerks' Association to TUC, 2 April 1927, MSS 292 114/1, Modern Records Office

During the 1920s, railway companies began to operate bus services in a big way. In 1928 the NUR raised the issue of employment matters regarding busmen and the companies agreed to bring full-time bus workers within the negotiating machinery of the Railways Act of 1921.[185] Agreed rates of pay were established together with a standard forty-eight hour week. After one year's service each man was to get a week's holiday. This did not please the TGWU as they had opposed road powers being given to railway companies and accused the NUR of poaching their members.[186]

Pay had risen throughout the 1920s but the depression hit the railway industry drastically. In 1931 the railway companies were asking for a cut in wages which they managed by two and a half per cent after going to the Salaries Board on 5 March 1931.[187] This was no time to press for more holidays as the unions were now fighting over pay and the right to employment itself. The trade union and co-operative representatives on the Railway's Board said the problems of transport could only be solved by nationalisation and public ownership and control.[188]

At the AGM of the NUR in July 1937, the Executive Committee was directed to go for a minimum fifty shillings wage and in accordance with this the EC drafted a six point programme in April 1938 which demanded not only a fifty shillings minimum wage but twelve days' holiday as well.[189] This claim was referred to a tribunal in 1939 where it was pointed out that in Norway,

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[185] Bagwell, op cit, p504

[186] Ibid

[187] Ibid, p514-515

[188] Ibid, p559

[189] Ibid

Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Italy, rail workers all had seven days more holiday than British railwaymen. The recommendations of the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, that all holidays should be of longer than a week's duration was also used to further the case. The railway companies' representative made a plea of poverty to reject the demands made by the unions. They argued that the fifty shillings minimum wage would remove differentiations in seniority and work differences. In anticipation of this, John Marchant, the NUR representative, said that the decision of the tribunal should be based on the essential justice of the claims. It was wrong to reject legitimate claims of those employed in order to provide interest on redundant capital. Little was actually offered by the tribunal and a special general meeting of members rejected the offer. By 8 August 1939 receipts on railways for goods traffic were up by a half million pounds per week over that of a year earlier, owing to the demands of the rearmament programme. The claim of the NUR was now seen as so imperative in the labour movement that the RCA declared it was prepared to drop its own demands for the time being in order to give support to those of the NUR in its claim for a fifty shillings minimum wage. Unfortunately the three days' additional holiday squeezed from the railways' board on top of the existing week was all that could be obtained through the existing negotiating machinery. The mainline companies refused to grant conciliation grades twelve days' paid holidays on the grounds of cost.[190] The demands of the Second World War delayed any further campaigning until the return of peacetime.

In the pottery industry, in the depression of the 1930s there was no rise in pay between 1931 and 1937. But in

[190] Ibid

1936 the unemployment level in the industry began to fall, down to 18.1 per cent which was still very high compared with the national rate of 12.1 per cent.[191] What the rate had been is not mentioned in the source but the revival in trade was enough to enable the workers to campaign for the first pay rise in five years and in the following spring of 1937 an agreement was made giving them, as well as a two and a half per cent increase on the pay rates, holidays with pay. This was conceded to those who had been employed for twelve months or more prior to August 1937. Payment was made on a fixed scale ranging from twelve shillings and sixpence for fourteen year old boys to sixty shillings for men over twenty-five. For females the rates were lower at a range between ten shillings and sixpence to thirty shillings.

Year	Girls	Boys	Women	Men >25
1937	10s 6d	12s 6d	30s	60s

Table Showing Pottery Industry Holiday Pay Rates, 1937.[192]

Indicative of the importance of the state of the individual trades and occupations, this gain was not extended to the sanitary earthenware trade where employers were asking for a five per cent pay cut. The workers successfully resisted this but did not get the two and a half per cent rise although presumably the holiday arrangement was conferred. In South Derbyshire six sanitary earthenware factories not in the employers' federation refused to comply with the March notice (the means by which both sides of the industry conveyed their demands for the years pay and conditions negotiations) on minimum rates and holidays and a strike of 160 men ensued. Settlement was reached at two factories after a few weeks but the other four firms had to hold out longer

[191] F Birchill and R Ross; A History of the Potters' Union, Stoke on Trent, 1977, p185

[192] F Birchill and R Ross, ibid

as the strikes do not seem to have been solid.[193] The Ceramic and Allied Trades Union (CATU) gained from the holiday agreement with an influx of new members although in one firm six women were sacked and cheaper child labour hired to replace them.

The importance of the issue of paid holidays to the union members was shown at Possilpark, Scotland, in the stoneware trade where some weaknesses in organisation had been shown. They were not paid for New Year's Day and a strike ensued on 6 January 1941, even though it was during war time. The strength and organisation of the CATU is shown by the fact that from 1939-41 under a cost of living scheme wages rose by eighteen shillings a week.[194] Such an increase applied to no other trade union and it was reported to be the best union organisation in Great Britain. However this was only a short-term advantage as the 1939 agreement tied them to its terms and after 1941 wages fell relative to other trades.[195]

The foundry trade, like other industries, was hit by the recession between the wars. Its situation is also indicative of the relationship between trade union organisation, economic circumstance and holidays. Wages were reduced during the slump in the 1920s and then again in 1929-32. The Foundry Workers' Union had a record of almost unrelieved failure. However, one advance in the foundry industry made in the 1930s was the winning of holidays with pay although there had long been traditional holidays. These had been unpaid so had been seen by some members as unemployment without the dole. The National Union of Foundry Workers Council in 1937 wrote, "What a period of anxiety those periodic

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[193] Ibid

[194] Birchill and Ross, op cit, p185

[195] Ibid

stoppages, misnamed holidays, mean in the average working class household".[196] The Iron Workers' Association (IWA) was the first foundry union to join in the campaign for holidays with pay. In July 1934, Harry Sinclair, the organisation's English organiser, attended a meeting on the subject in Warrington. Two local firms were asked to meet the union to discuss the question of a week's paid holiday but both said it was a national question and the matter was accordingly referred to the National Joint Council of the Light Metal Trades.

The unions turned to direct negotiations with employers and in March 1938 an agreement was made between the Engineering and Allied Employers' National Federation and the Engineering Joint Trades Movement backdated to the previous August. These agreements granted six days' paid holiday for every fifty weeks of forty-seven hours worked.[197] However the forty hour week campaign waged alongside the one for holidays was lost because of a combination of government and employer opposition and workers' apathy at a time when so many were glad to have work at all. Within two months of the foundry workers' agreement, a similar one was made between the Iron and Steel Trades Employers' Association and the National Light Castings Iron Founders' Federation.

The situation in the engineering trade was similar to that in the foundries. In the early 1930s, holidays with pay were still virtually unknown in the engineering industry and trade unionists called the summer shutdowns "lockouts" because wages were so low that engineers clamoured to work in these periods. The issue of holidays was not taken up by shop stewards until the

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[196] H J Fyrth and Henry Collins; The Foundry Workers, Manchester, 1957, p221

[197] Fyrth and Collins, op cit, p222

years 1935-37. Engineering employers conceded the principle of holidays with pay to the Amalgamated Engineering Union during the 1937 negotiations. The Select Committee was told that the engineers had received this concession in their pay negotiations when they were offered half of the increase in the form of increased wages and the other half, of equal value, in the form of a paid holiday.[198] When this happened engineering workers no longer anticipated the summer lockouts with foreboding, but could look forward to them with some limited amount of financial security.[199] All firms federated to the Union were to inaugurate holiday funds into which one fifth of the value of each week's wages would be paid.[200]

The Hosiery Union had made the demand for holidays with pay before 1920 when paid holidays seemed just weeks away.[201] Unfortunately the slump hit the industry in 1920 and the demand was not actually achieved until after the Second World War. From 1924 the wages of the majority of hosiery workers were improving but they had probably already fallen between 1920 and 1924. In Leicester, there were reductions in pay for those working on the now less popular fully fashioned underwear. The local leader, Chaplin, would have called a strike but he feared he would only have persuaded about a tenth of the membership to come out. An agreement on overtime also collapsed due to membership inertia and there was difficulty enforcing agreements regarding pay. In a questionnaire sent to employers in 1938, only 58 of 245

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[198] Minutes of Evidence Before the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, p 400, para 5156

[199] Richard Croucher; Engineers at War 1939-1945, London, 1982, p103

[200] Robert Graves and Alan Hodge, The Long Weekend - A Social History of Great Britain 1918-1939, London, 1941, p381

[201] Richard Gurnham, "200 Years - The hosiery Unions 1776-1976, Leicester, 1976, p105

respondents said that they were keeping to overtime agreements.[202] The union had virtually lost all control of working hours between the wars and this weakness militated against them reaching any agreement on a holidays with pay scheme.[203] Union membership declined, especially amongst female members who were the majority in the hosiery workforce. Existing agreements could not be enforced, let alone further advances made, such as paid leave. Many of the workers may still have had holidays away from home as the industry was centred in the Leicestershire area where there was less unemployment amongst male workers in the expanding light engineering trades. The overall family income may have been sufficient to allow some of them to take an unpaid holiday away with their families.

The subject of holidays with pay was raised again in 1937 by Hosiery Union leaders. By this time many other workers had already gained a scheme for holidays with pay. Members felt cheated by the employers when negotiators agreed to drop their demands when the employers pointed out that the government was expected to introduce a compulsory scheme. The outbreak of war meant that this never came to pass in the immediate future.[204] No holiday with pay agreement was signed until 1948, this was made retrospective to 1947 when modest interim war time agreements expired. Men were to receive a pound and women thirteen shillings and sixpence a day for a week's holiday in summer and for two days at Easter, Whitsuntide and Christmas. The National Wages and Conditions of Employment Agreement was updated in May 1951 when the national union signed a new settlement. A second weeks'

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[202] Ibid

[203] Ibid

[204] Gurnham, op cit, p135

paid holiday was obtained, plus a third day at each of the statutory holidays.[205]

The nature of the piece-work payments in the industry and rapid technological change meant there was considerable local variation in conditions. National agreements do not seem to have been applied universally. Oral interviews with hosiery workers and employers' representatives in Hinckley and Leicestershire revealed that no-one who was working in the trade in the very early 1950s remembers being paid for holidays, one respondent relates that this did not come about until the 1960s.[206] The holiday pay agreement provided for fourteen per cent of average annual earnings to be paid, divided between the periods of leave.[207]

5.8 Holidays With Pay as a Campaigning Trade Union Issue

The examples cited above demonstrate the variety of approaches to holidays in different industries, all of which employed large numbers of workers and were predominantly unionised. The miners seem to have had as much time off as they pleased although it was unpaid. They used their own ability to control production levels to produce more coal in order to make up for wages lost when on holiday. Absenteeism was normal throughout the industry and a formalised system of holiday taking was

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[205] Gurnham, op cit, p156

[206] Interviews with Bill Boggan and Bert and Anne Hall, recorded by Rhianydd Murray for the Arqueotex Textile Heritage Project, Hinckley, 1997-98, North Warwickshire and Hinckley College Library.

[207] Mr Bill Boggan, Hinckley and District Knitwear Association, Oral History Interview, Recorded by Rhianydd Murray, Arqueotex Textile Heritage Project, North Warwickshire and Hinckley College, 8 December 1997, Hinckley College Library

part of the employers' strategy to impose discipline on the work force. This aspect of their employment was a relic of earlier productive relations, when work was done to fit the pace of the worker. The boot and shoe workers were early campaigners for holidays but the best they could arrange was a contributory scheme to which the employers added a payment as an incentive to save. This would also have a disciplinary effect as contributions had to be made weekly. In some cases absenteeism could count against a worker who would not be eligible for the employer's "gift".

In the textile industries, especially in northern England, the workers had a substantial amount of time off for holidays which was unpaid. However the workers got round this problem by savings clubs set up for the purpose of saving for holidays although often, according to the TUC, the clubs were used to save up for other more essential household items. Regular savings amongst this group of workers suggests both security of employment and a wage level high enough to enable a person to make regular payments to a savings scheme without it causing hardship. The thirty-five shilling and sixpence average weekly pay for textile workers at this time (1937) does not suggest that wages were particularly high compared to other trades, for example a coal miner would have earned about fifty shillings per week but the evidence suggests that he also would have found difficulty in making savings. However the textile workers' thirty-five shillings wage was an average and it included the pay of women and young people as well as male workers. The high incidence of women working in the textile trade suggests family rather than individual incomes might have been the basis for calculating whether or not savings could be made.

On the railways and in the printing industry holidays with pay were secured by collective bargaining from the mid-nineteenth century, quite early on compared with other industries. Both obtained national agreements in the year immediately following the First World War when there was a short boom before the world economy plunged into a prolonged slump. These occupations were also highly unionised and had national negotiating machinery because of strong union organisation on a country wide basis.

Strangely, the engineering industry, which also had a strong union organisation based on skilled workers, did not manage to secure holidays with pay for its workers until 1937 and then only in a minority of factories. The relatively high wages of the nineteenth century engineering craftsmen placed them in the so called labour aristocracy. This could have allowed them to save up for holidays if they so wished, so that they could take time off without a great deal of hardship. The engineering labour force was highly sectionalised with different skills and pay differentials. Not all engineering workers were highly paid and in the 1930s the wages are described as being so low that the engineers could not afford to put money by and resented the summer shutdowns as they would have prefered to work.[208]

The steel industry was another prominent industrial sector where no paid leave was received until the Holidays with Pay Act became imminent. The first time a holiday without loss of earnings was secured was for the Royal Silver Jubilee in May 1935.[209] According to a report

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[208] Croucher, op cit, p103

[209] "Men of Steel by One of Them", A Chronicle of 88 Years of Trade Unionism in the British Iron and Steel Industry, Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, London, 1951, p509

from the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation (ISTC) office, this created "quite an amount of discussion in employers' circles, but on the whole has been fruitful of considerable results, and many thousands of pounds have been distributed amongst members which otherwise would not have been obtained".[210] The decision was left to individual firms with no definite recommendation to employers to pay wages for the day lost.

The following year, a conference was held at Swansea to consider wages issues. The conference also heard the report of a sub-committee which showed progress was being made towards holidays with pay and that in general the principle had been accepted.[211] The payment of a bonus of two pounds for the August Bank Holiday week was given to workers over twenty-one years old and twenty shillings to those younger.[212] This was a bonus and not holiday pay. At a meeting of the executive in November 1937, further progress regarding paid holidays was reported. In the Sheffield area a scheme had been agreed with the Sheffield employers' association providing a week's holiday with pay of a minimum of three pounds, rising to £6 5s for the higher paid melters. This agreement applied to men working in Siemens open-hearth and electric furnace plants.[213] The meeting heard that negotiations were continuing in South Wales and in the Midlands. Later that year, the ISTC extended the agreement in Sheffield to cover all the city's rolling mills, forges and press shops.[214] The holiday allowances varied according to grade from £2 10 shillings for general labourers up to six pounds for roller or

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[210] Ibid

[211] Ibid, p530

[212] Ibid

[213] Men of Steel, op cit, p531

[214] Men of Steel, op cit, p535

forgemen.[215] It was a cause of grievance that the agreement applied to all those in the industry not just ISTC members, some of them in other unions, some in none at all. "It was a case of reaping where they had not sown" but it was not possible to discriminate.[216] This was not a national agreement and only applied to steel workers in Sheffield. The steel workers were awaiting the outcome of the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, which met during the same year, for further progress to be assured.

From the evidence, it can be seen that there were various methods of securing a holiday: absenteeism preceded by a period of high output by piece workers; unpaid holidays secured by agreement with the employer, for which workers made voluntary provision through savings schemes; holidays with pay gained by collective bargaining; holidays arranged through collective agreements but with contributory schemes arranged by employers to which the employer made a contribution; unpaid holidays for which no provision was made by workers who regarded the shutdowns as lock outs. Where collective agreements secured holidays with pay it was as a result of campaigns by unions in a relatively strong bargaining position[217] or whose members were sufficiently organised and were prepared to take action to support their claim.[218] Where these conditions did not prevail, no holidays with pay could be won from the employers,[219] even when demands for holidays had been made.

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[215] Ibid

[216] Ibid

[217] eg railways, print trade

[218] eg foundry workers, potters

[219] eg hosiery workers

On 21 October 1937 in the House of Commons, the Minister of Labour estimated that at that date there were between 2,500,000 and 2,750,000 work people covered by collective agreements providing for paid holidays.[220] Such agreements existed in at least thirty-four separate industries and services providing holidays with pay for manual workers by June of that year. Some individual firms also introduced such schemes and there were already a large number receiving holidays with pay through custom of the trade. Altogether, by the time of the Select Committee, the TUC calculated that there were probably about 5,025,000 employed persons, excluding salaried employees, in receipt of paid holidays in one form or another.[221] This demonstrates the rising demand and force for change in society as only the previous June the total had been estimated at around four million, exclusive of the salaried sector, only about half of these were manual workers. Of these hardly any received a holiday of more than one week's duration. This still left about three-quarters of the workforce outside the scope of such provision.

For the more fortunate quarter of the working population, the winning of the right to holidays with pay was on the whole achieved in two periods: immediately after the First World War during the industrial crisis and rise in militancy which led to demands for improved conditions and the willingness in a number of trades to take action to secure them; and in the 1930s as the long slump came to an end and workers regained confidence in their ability to win reforms through their own activity in the trade unions. As the threat of unemployment subsided,

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[220] Memorandum of Evidence by the General Council of the TUC to Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, p22, para 16

[221] Ibid

workers were willing once more to fight to improve their working conditions and pay.

The demand for holidays with pay had first been taken up by the TUC as a demand of the entire labour movement at its conference in 1911 but this had met with little serious consideration at the time. As has been argued, some well-organised unions had achieved payment during periods of annual leave in the years immediately after the First World War. Workers employed by the co-operative movement also benefitted from such agreements relatively early compared with other manual workers. The Manchester and District, Bolton and District and Co-operative Wages Board and Journeyman Butchers' Federation Agreement on Holidays in 1922, provided for holidays ranging from three days for employees with less than six months' service and six days for those who had been working for six months or more.[222] No deductions for Bank and other recognised holidays was made either. This agreement combined with the mill-workers tradition of saving for holidays to cover thirteen and a half days off at this time, would have made an annual period of leave practically universal in the textile producing region of Lancashire, not just in the cotton industry itself. In 1925 approximately one and a half million workers nationally were covered by collective agreements, usually giving six days' paid holiday after a year's work.[223]

This period also saw a growth in concern about health and safety issues, particularly industrial illness and accidents. With the intention of creating better health

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[222] Manchester and District, Bolton and District and Co-opeartive Wages Board and the Journeyman Butchers' Federation Agreement on Holidays, 1922, sent to TUC, MSS 292 114/1, Modern Records Centre

[223] Minutes of Evidence to the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, p1, para 4

conditions in industry the TUC, at its 1926 conference in Bournemouth, decided on a campaign for two weeks' holiday with pay as well as statutory holidays and May Day.[224] A circular from the TUC General Council to all affiliated union branches, gave the text of this resolution.

> That this Congress requests the Council to secure for all workers -
> a) an annual summer holiday of two weeks with full pay,
> b) payment for all statutory holidays; and
> c) May Day as an additional statutory holiday.[225]

The resolution had been a composite one, fathered by several organisations. The demand for a national campaign had come from the National Union of Building Trade Workers. The National Union of Distributive and Allied Workers (NUDAW) had also contributed to the wording of the resolution. Walter Citrine wrote to these unions asking for advice as to how a national campaign could be undertaken. A General Secretary of the NUDAW, Hallsworth, wrote back to the TUC saying that as far as his union was concerned, the first step would be:

> For the General Council to send a circular letter to all Trade Unions, calling their attention to the resolution and asking them when entering upon negotiations with employers, to place in the forefront of their demands, the request for fifty-two weeks' wages for every member in every year. They might also be asked to table resolutions at their various Delegate Meetings demanding that the

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[224] TUC General Council Circular No 34 (1926-27), MSS 292 114/1 1926-33, Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick; Fyrth and Collins, op cit, p193

[225] TUC General Council Circular No 34 (1926-27)

> securing of this condition shall be one of the declared objects of their union. In addition to this, we would suggest that the General Secretary arrange for an article or articles to appear in the "Daily Herald" advocating this policy. A good deal of evidence in support of the demand can be worked into such articles or into such an article by a concise statement of the extent to which this policy was already being recognised in certain industries and by certain employers.[226]

The day after this letter was sent, Walter Citrine wrote to the National Brass and Metal Mechanics Union, based in Birmingham, requesting further advice. Arthur Gibbard, the Union's General Secretary replied:

> My Committee think that a National Movement could be started in a similar manner to that which has been done by our Society in the Birmingham area.
>
> We believe that if all Societies or groups of Societies having agreements with Employers, locally or nationally, adopted a method of either local or national applications for the payment of holidays in a similar manner to that taken by our Society locally, it would then give some indication of our position and its practical possibilities, and the Employers' attitude upon the question.
>
> Some little time after the Congress had been held at Bournemouth, we approached the Birmingham and District Brassfounders' Employers' Association on

[226] Letter from J Hallsworth, General Secretary, National Union of Distributive and Allied Workers to Walter Citrine General Secretary, TUC, Manchester, 27 January 1927, MSS 292/114

this subject, and had some considerable discussion with them.

The employers viewed the question more favourably than we expected, and they went as far as to state that if the principle was generally adopted, then they would readily consider the application of such a claim to the Industry in the Birmingham and District area.

We feel that if this course was generally taken by all Societies that it would give some indication of the probabilities of getting such a claim brought into operation.[227]

Paid holidays was not just an issue to the English trade union movement; the International Federation of Trade Unions began to formulate policies covering a much wider area. In response to a questionnaire distributed by IFTU to the TUCGC, the Research Department reported that the only legislation regarding holidays in Britain applied to shop assistants and made provision for a week or a fortnight's holiday with pay, which was given as compensation for shop assistants working longer hours than the normal working day, or as an alternative to the half-holiday.[228] Using information such as this, gathered from labour movement organisations around the world, IFTU was able to produce a draft resolution on holidays which was known as the Tayerle Resolution, at its General Council Meeting held at Prague in May 1929. The Resolution concluded that the economic and hygienic

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[227] Letter from Arthur H Gibbard, General Secretary, National Brass and Metal Mechanics, Birmingham, 9 March 1927, to Walter Citrine, TUC, MSS 292/114

[228] Trades Union Congress General Council, Research Department, Holidays with Pay (IFTU Questionnaire), R292263, MSS 292/114

conditions under which the employee worked entitled him to a regular holiday. This would have to be achieved not just by collective bargaining but by legislation.

> The trend of the modern technique of production, which is towards unbroken acceleration of pace, systematically exhausts the body and mind of the worker and renders it absolutely imperative that he should have an annual holiday of some considerable duration. The annual holiday is closely associated with the question of working hours and the distribution of work and rest, both of which also form the basis of the urge towards the rationalisation of production and human activity. In view of these principles, it is absolutely necessary that a minimum paid annual holiday shall be guaranteed, not merely by collective agreements, but also by social legislation.[229]

The following demands were formulated by IFTU for adoption by it constituent members:

1. Whether their work is physical or mental, workers shall be granted a paid annual holiday of a least 14 days. After long service the duration of this holiday should be proportionately extended. In the case of elderly workers it should be at least three weeks per year. Persons doing heavy work should receive three weeks holiday and elderly workers in this category four weeks.
2. Young workers up to eighteen years of age should in view of their physical development be guaranteed a holiday of at least four weeks.

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[229] Taylerle Resolution, Draft Resolution on Holidays for Workers and Salaried Employees, For the Executive Meeting of 22 May 1929, MSS 292/114/1

3. The Internatioanl Labour Office should be requested to initiate an enquiry into the claim, and to compile a draft international convention through which the minimum holiday laid down by the International Convention should be guaranteed in the legislation of the individual countries.
4. The national centres affiliated with the IFTU should be requested to give especial attention to the holiday question and to use appropriate means to secure its regulation in the collective agreements of the individual trades. The national centres should inaugurate action for statutory regulation of this question.
5. To promote these endeavours, the IFTU should publish the results of inquiries made in respect of the holiday claim, and repeat such publications after the lapse of some time, in order to gauge the progress made in putting through the claim.[230]

The Taylerle Resolution concluded with the assertion that the holiday issue was closely associated with the efforts made by the ILO regarding the utilisation of spare time and the wise use of holiday by young workers. To this end trade unions were told they should establish holiday homes with the aid of state and other public bodies.

The Resolution from IFTU reflected the position of many British unions. A letter from the National Union of Stove Grate and General Metal Workers in June 1929, informed the TUC of a policy it had recently adopted. It demanded "that the TUC General Council press for legislation to make it compulsory for every employer of labour to pay to all employees at least one week's summer

[230] Ibid

holiday with pay each year.[231] Walter Citrine, the TUC's General Secretary received a letter expressing similar sentiments from Gorton United Trades and Labour Council in September 1929. It forwarded the resolution that "this Council requests the TUC General Council to press the government to institute a national annual holiday with pay for all workers".[232] Congress met in Belfast later that year and reaffirmed its commitment to annual holidays with pay by passing the following resolution:

> That in the opinion of Congress the time is opportune to press for payment for holidays for all workers. Such payment to be made on the basis of wages earned, whether the work is on piece work or on time work. Holidays to be paid for, all statutory and customary holidays, in addition to two weeks' annual holiday. Further, this Congress calls upon the whole Labour Movement, both political and industrial, nationally and locally, to use its utmost power to ensure the practical application of this resolution at the earliest possible date.[233]

The General Council circulated information to secretaries of all constituent unions of the policy accepted by the Bristol Congress. The circular, in the form of a letter from A S Firth, Assistant General Secretary, concluded with the paragraph:

> I shall be glad therefore if your Executive will take such steps as they deem possible generally to

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[231] Letter from the National Union of Stove, Grate and General Metal Workers to TUCGC, 12 June 1929, MSS 292 114/1 1926-33

[232] Letter to Walter Citrine, TUC, from W Woolley of Gorton United Trades and Labour Council, 19 September 1929, MSS 292 114/1 1926-33

[233] TUCGC, Finance and General Purposes Committee 10/1. 1929-30, MSS 292/114/1

create interest in this suggestion, and particularly to secure consideration of the practical application of this resolution by your members.[234]

Following the Belfast Resolution, the British Labour Movement took up the campaign in the way advocated by IFTU in the Taylerle Resolution. In 1929, Labour MP, Ernest Winterton supported by other Labour colleagues, had introduced to Parliament a Private Member's Bill, which was supported by the TUC and a number of affiliated unions. It was read for a second time and went before a Standing Committee on 15 November of that year. The TUC accepted though that as it was a Private Member's Bill, and of course controversial, the chances of its becoming law were remote, even though the discussion in Committee would be of great value.[235] An important aspect of the Bill was proposed power for its enforcement. There was "a provision rendering it penal for an employer to attempt to evade the provisions of the Bill by dismissing or suspending an employed person, the penal liability being in addition to any civil liability".[236] At this time there was a Labour government, which may have given the unions and workers more confidence to press for reforms. The Amalgamated Weavers' Society had written to the TUC in February 1930, declaring its resolve to secure paid holidays for its members and all workers.[237] More letters describing branch policies in accordance with the Bill were sent to the TUCGC in May 1930 from the Barge Builders' Trade Union,[238] the Typographical Association,

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[234] TUCGC, Circular No 69, 8 May 1930, MSS 292/114

[235] Ibid

[236] Ibid

[237] Letter to TUC from the Amalgamated Weavers' Society, 3 February 1930, MSS 292 114/1

[238] Letter from Thomas Challis of the Barge Builders' Trade Union, 23 May 1930, MSS 292 114/1

the National Union of Railwaymen,[239] the National Union of Blast Furnacemen, Ore Miners, Coke Workers and Kindred Trades[240] and the National Society of Electrotypers and Stereotypers which declared unanimous support and stated that only seven per cent of its members were not already getting a fortnight's holiday with pay.[241] Another letter, sent by the National Asylum Workers' Union stated that holidays were general amongst its members, who were municipal employees, but it hoped the practice would become popular amongst private employers.[242] These responses in support of the Bill, appear to have been from unions with existing policy on paid holidays. A letter was received by A S Firth of the TUC's General Council from Samuel Fisher of the Cardiff, Penarth and Barry Coal Trimmers' Association in June 1930. It said "the management committee of the union are all in favour of workmen being paid for holidays and we are doing all we can to create a demand for the above (sic)".[243] This wording implies a hurried response to a request from union branches for support for Winterton's Bill received between scheduled branch meetings, as the letter refers to the management committee's position, not that of the branch as a whole. With two month's longer to organise a discussion in the branch, a letter in August from W Allington, the Branch Secretary of the Number Two Barrow in Furness Branch of the Electrical Trade Union, informed Congress of its resolution "That the government be urged

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[239] Letters from the Typographical Association and the NUR to TUCGC, May 1930, MSS 292 114/1

[240] Letter from the National Union of Blast Furnacemen, Ore Miners, Coke Workers and Kindred Trades to TUCGC, 13 May 1930, MSS 292 114/1

[241] Letter from National Society of Electrotypers and Stereotypers to TUCGC, 9 May 1930, MSS 292 114/1

[242] Letter from the National Asylum Workers' Union to the TUC, 9 May 1930, MSS 292 114/1

[243] Letter from Samuel Fisher, Cardiff, Penarth and Barry Coal Trimmers' Association to A S Firth, TUCGC, 2 June 1930, MSS 292 114/1

to proceed immediately on the above vexed question, Holidays with Pay for All Workers".[244] After serious and lengthy discussion, the Barrow Trade's Council passed its own policy on the issue. Its secretary, W Spencer, sent the following text of its motion "that we ask the TUC and the TUCGC and also the MP for the borough, to bring pressure into Parliament in respect to Payment for Holidays for all workers, as in our opinion this is long overdue".[245] Portsmouth Trades Council, too, were organising around the slogan "Holidays with Pay for all Workers".[246]

All these letters of support and resolutions from trade union branches show that the demand did not represent the view of a few members in a single or even a few isolated branches. It had become a general demand of the trade union movement which could now develop a united campaign for its achievement. Even so, no communication had been addressed to the employers' organisations. As the Minister of Labour, at that time Margaret Bondfield, an early supporter of the Workers' Travel Association,[247] felt that no good purpose would be served except by allowing the action of the Department to be determined by the Trade Union view on the matter. Leggett of the TUC, in a memorandum to Firth, said he had pointed out to Winterton the sort of reply which would have been received from the National Confederation and that it seemed highly desirable to avoid creating a position at that time in which there would be clearly defined

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[244] Letter from W Allington, Branch Secretary No 2 Barrow in Furness Branch of the Electrical Trade Union to TUCGC, 29 August 1930, MSS 292 114/1 1926-33

[245] Letter to TUCGC from W Spencer, Barrow Trade's Council, 1930, MSS 292 114/1 1926-33

[246] Letter from R S Ball, General Secretary, Portsmouth Trades Council, to Walter Citrine, 21 July 1930, MSS 292/114

[247] Francis Williams, Journey Into Adventure, London, 1960, p22

hostility between the employers' and Trade Union view on the subject, "seeing that if the matter was handled patiently, the two sides may be led to cooperate in the objective consideration of the matter for which there was considerable sympathy even on the employers' side".[248] The position of Bondfield and Leggett was that formal action of the kind Winterton seemed to expect, would probably have done more harm than good. Failure to approach employers, however, does not seem to have been in the spirit of the Belfast or Taylerle Resolutions and can only be interpreted as lack of confidence of the ultimate success of the campaign at that stage in 1930.

The commitment to securing holidays with pay was again reaffirmed at the Nottingham Congress of November 1930. This resolution suggested that the General Council should take steps to give effect to the unions' claim and urged all Trade Union and Labour organisations to bring the matter before their members and thus assist the General Council in their efforts.[249] Again in 1931, at the Bristol Congress, the demand for compulsory holidays with pay was reiterated in a resolution moved by the National Union of Clerks and Administrative Workers and seconded by the National Union of Textile Workers.[250]

To assist unions in the ongoing campaign, copies of agreements reached in other branches and trades were circulated to all affiliated unions. When progress was made in negotiations for paid leave, the TUC was informed and sent out the details to other unions, where copies of

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[248] Memo from F W Leggett to A S Firth, TUCGC, 25 November 1930, MSS 292/114

[249] Industrial News for the Use of the Press, No 224, issued by the Publicity Department of the TUCGC, 23 December 1930

[250] Bristol Congress Resolution 1931, 3. Holidays with Pay, Composite, Page 333; TUCGC, Circular No 38 (1931-32), 31 December 1931, MSS 292/114

agreements acted as a blueprint in the deliberations of others. Where agreements had not yet been ratified it was normal practice to supply the information to branch officers only, with the caution not to make the details public in case it jeopardised the conclusion of the bargaining process through pressure on the employer from other employers. The National Amalgamated Furnishing Trades Association were supplied with copies of agreements in November 1932.[251]

By the time of the 1933 Congress, the composite resolution calling for paid holidays had been stengthened in its wording. In a motion moved by the National Federation of Insurance workers and seconded by the National Union of Sheet Metal Workers and Braziers, it was resolved once again:

> That in the opinion of this Congress, it is necessary and essential to press for payment for holidays for all workers. Such payment to be made on the basis of wages earned, whether the work is on piecework or on time work.[252]

Where the wording was strengthened was in its conclusion, this time the text ended with the words "The Congress 'instructs' the General Council to take all necessary steps in an endeavour to achieve this object".[253] The previous resolutions had only asked the General Council to "urge Trade Unions and Labour Organisations to bring

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[251] Letter to National Amalgamated Furnishing Trades Association from TUC, 11 November 1932, MSS 292 114/1

[252] Congress Resolution 1933, Composite 13 Holidays with Pay, Page 277, MSS 292/114/2

[253] Ibid

the matter before their members and assist the General Council in their efforts".[254]

At the International Labour Organisation Conference (ILOC), thirty-five governments had voted for a international convention on holidays with pay but the British National Government and four others voted for a recommendation to industry only. By 1936 the whole trade union movement was taking up the demand and campaigns for holidays with pay were part of a general social trend towards more intervention by the state in industrial and employment matters, for example unemployment, health and retirement pension insurance schemes. The TUC passed another resolution calling for two weeks' holiday with pay in September 1936 and two weeks later another Private Member's Bill was sponsored by the Labour Party, which would have given every worker in the same employment for twelve months or more eight days paid holiday in addition to existing entitlements[255]. When the Private Member's Bill reached the committee stage before being defeated, a Tory amendment said it should apply only when a Minister of Labour was satisfied that wages were such that employees could not make their own provision and that such holidays would not harm trade or industry. Twenty-two nations by that time, including Brazil, Portugal, France, Poland, and Russia had holidays with pay but not the UK. The government however did concede a committee of enquiry and the TUC plus representatives of particular industries presented evidence before it. A resolution of the Bakers', Confectioners' and Bakery Workers' Union, which was affiliated to the Parliamentary Labour Party, called for

[254] Industrial News for the Use of the Press, No 224 ,op cit

[255] Fyrth and Collins, op cit, p221

legal enactment of payment for holiday periods for all workers.[256]

The Labour Party called for and initiated a summer campaign in seaside towns to increase public interest in "Labour's Immediate Programme" and the proposals for Holidays with Pay in particular, canvassing support from people on holiday.[257] The Party circulated branches and Trades Councils in resorts, such as Scarborough and Southport, advising them of its proposal. In this year too, the TUC again reaffirmed its policy at its Norwich Congress when a resolution calling for a fortnight's holiday with pay was moved by the Amalgamated Weavers' Association, seconded by the National Union of Boot and Shoe Operatives and supported by the Amalgamated Engineering Union and the National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers.[258] This campaigning pressure was instrumental in achieving the establishment of the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay. Even so, the steel workers' union, the ISTC, in its magazine, "Man and Metal" observed of the Committee:

> While it was hoped that the Committee would be able to issue its findings at an early date, it would now appear that the hope is likely to be disappointed as the organized employers are adopting their time-honoured delaying tactics and propose to offer evidence in sections instead of as a body through the employers' central organisation.[259]

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[256] Resolution of the Bakers', Confectioners' and Bakery Workers' Union, communicated to the TUC, June 1937, MSS 292 114/2

[257] Letter from Southport Trades' Council and Labour Party to the TUCGC, 1937, MSS 292 114/2 1934-46

[258] Trades Union Congress Resolution, Norwich, 1937, MSS 292 114/2

[259] Men of Steel, op cit, p532

Much of the debate surrounding paid holidays centred not on their desirability but on how they would be financed. The main contending proposals were: a contributory scheme in which the employer, worker and State each contributed similar amounts like the health insurance scheme; a contributory scheme where workers and employers contributed, like that in the boot and shoe industry, Derbyshire coalfield and later the building trade; or schemes financed entirely by the employer, either out of wages or out of gross profits. The latter proposition was favoured by the TUC. The argument rested on the TUC's assertion that the idea of a holiday scheme should be to ensure that taking a holiday would not leave a workman materially worse off. To allow this, payment should be secured at the normal rate of pay, excluding overtime, for the time taken. The TUC objected to a State contribution as that would mean taxpayers, working people, still paying for it. They were also concerned that it would encourage the State to "poke its nose in" and prescribe conditions that would be objectionable. Any other form of contributory scheme would also mean the worker paying for his or her own holiday. Ideally the TUC wanted legislation laying down the principles to be adhered to but wherever possible maintaining collective bargaining and negotiation procedures between employers' and workers' organisations intact. They aimed to have the force of law behind any arrangement for holidays while leaving the actual details as flexible as possible. This would give scope for some unions to secure better terms while giving unorganised workers minimum legal entitlements.

Arguments presented from the employers' side were uncharacteristically in favour of collective bargaining, argued the TUC witnesses, as they wished to avoid any state interference in industry. The anomaly of this

argument was pointed out by TUC representatives who found it odd that the employers should support what in the unions' point of view meant strike action as this was usually the only way workers were able to bring their employers into the collective bargaining process and win any advances. Normally, they asserted:

> where employers went into the negotiation process it was because they were coerced by the threat of strikes. It was only past strikes that had brought the employers to see the benefits of collective bargaining.[260]

The TUC did not agree with the view that all agreements should be achieved through voluntary collective bargaining, believing that any necessary flexibility and variety could be secured by making the law only in general terms, giving to the Ministry of Labour or some other appropriately constituted authority, power to give legal force to agreements concluded between the organisations of the employers and work people. It favoured a scheme whereby employers and workers in each industry or trade should be required to submit a draft proposal for the approval of the Minister of Labour. Failure to do so or in cases where no proper negotiating machinery existed would result in the Minister drafting a scheme in consultation with industry representatives. Without some legal compulsion it was not envisaged how all working people could be ensured a paid holiday.

As was to be expected, industry claimed not to be able to afford to make such a concession, especially those export industries where there was international competition from countries with lower paid work forces. The additional

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[260] Minutes of Evidence Before the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, p401, para 5179

costs, the unions claimed, would not have been excessive, only a matter of one shilling and fivepence halfpenny a week for weavers and one shilling and four pence for miners and for agricultural workers. The TUC countered the argument that it would be detrimental to industry by challenging the Committee to give an example of any of the industries which had already given holidays with pay having been adversely affected. Furthermore, they claimed that:

> Where paid holidays had been granted, the employers themselves attested that the effect of the holidays had been greatly to improve the physique and the power of the operatives, and in some cases actually increased output despite the holiday period.[261]

As the speed of production increased and changes in productive methods occurred in industry and the skill of the individual craftsman was replaced by repetitive tasks, the need for a break from the continual strain of work was becoming vital. The benefits to be derived from annual holidays with pay and the cost incurred as a result of not giving an annual break ought properly to be taken into account, Citrine submitted. "It was no longer a question of leisure or of wages" he said; "it was a question of ensuring that those people in a position where they might suffer from the strain of nerves incidental to certain industries may not be allowed to become what they would become if nothing was done".[262] Citrine also stated to the Committee, that "if a four per cent increase in costs would break British industry that

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[261] Ibid, p 401, para 5179

[262] Minute of Evidence Before the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, p37, para 139

there was no hope for labour nor any future for the country!"[263]

If holidays with pay were extended to the whole of the workforce, the additional profit made from their expenditure on leisure would compensate the economy. It would circulate more money over a much wider field, and consequently the business of the employers would improve.

The TUC's efforts to secure the advantage of paid holidays for members of its constituent unions were undermined by workers in some places choosing additional wage rises rather than a holiday. In the North Wales slate quarries, men were offered a choice between a week's holiday with pay (which would have cost the company about two pence halfpenny a day per man) plus a threepence increase on the daily wages or, alternatively, a straight five pence a day rise.[264] After consideration in the quarrymen's lodges they turned down the first offer which included the holiday although in financial terms it was the better deal. In a ballot on the second option they voted about 1,825 in favour and 336 against.[265]

Hypothetical cases were also brought up by the Committee where one industry might accept a straight holiday with pay in negotiations while another might choose to have half of its increase in pay the rest in holidays. What would happen if, as a result of legislation, the first group came back and claimed the holiday after already having taken the payrise? The TUC were anxious to separate the issues of wage rises and holidays which was hard to do as both were payments made to workers for the

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[263] Ibid

[264] Ibid, p 37, para 139

[265] Ibid, p400, para 5159-5160

same amount of production.[266] It was likely that only the same amount overall in funds would be forthcoming, whether it was divided up over fifty or fifty-two weeks during the year would make little difference to the individual worker.[267] If required to save for a holiday at least the employee would have had a choice in what was done with the money. Criticisms regarding paid holidays as an attack on thrift were also aimed at the TUC, who correctly pointed out that "even with paid holidays the workers would still need to save up to be able to go away. It was thereby likely to encourage thrift amongst even more people".[268]

The Holidays with Pay Act passed in 1938, was essentially a compromise between the views expressed from both sides of industry, based on the Select Committee's report, although the Act did not apply to all employees, which was not in keeping with its recommendations. The TUC's view that workers should not have to pay anything towards their own holidays prevailed and the Committee rejected contributory schemes and gave the Minister of Labour authority to help bring about voluntary schemes under collective agreements. Although two weeks' holiday was not seen as unreasonable, it was thought judicious to proceed with caution at first with one week as the immediate goal. The Holidays with Pay Act was not a strong piece of legislation and in some cases it retarded existing agreements. The Act itself proposed no more than three days' consecutive holiday.[269]

The Committee agreed that holidays were a condition of employment and should be removed from the sphere of

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[266] Ibid, p404, para 5232

[267] Ibid, p402, para 5186

[268] Ibid, p43, para 242

[269] Stephen G Jones, Workers at Play, p19

remuneration but they decided to allow industry the opportunity of dealing with this alone before applying compulsion. A probationary period was recommended so that as much as possible could be achieved through collective bargaining. This period was also needed to enable the details of how the legislation was to work to be devised and also to enable steps to be taken, such as staggering of holidays, to provide for the vastly increased numbers of people taking holidays away from home that would undoubtedly take place.

To publicise their new rights and entitlements to workers, and to promote trade unionism by emphasising its own role in the campaign, the TUC produced two booklets "Holidays For All"[270] which sold at twopence and "Holidays With Pay - The TUC Policy",[271] priced at threepence each. These materials were intended to be purchased by union branches for distribution to members, as they could be ordered at twelve copies for three shillings, fifty copies for eleven shillings or a hundred copies for a pound, post free.[272] The preface to Holidays For All contained the statement that the TUC had urged holidays as a:

> Neccessary consequence of mechanised industry and the speeding-up that has taken place in connection with it in many productive processes. Nerve-strain has become a common malady among wage-earners. Sickness, proneness to accident, absenteeism and other factors which interupt regular working are part of the costs which industry now bears that can be set off against the cost of introducing a general

[270] Holidays For All, TUC Booklet, 1938, MSS 292 114/3

[271] Holidays With Pay - The TUC Policy, 1938, MSS 292 114/3

[272] Holidays For All, op cit, footnote, p3

and comprehensive system of annual holidays with pay.[273]

Both of the TUC booklets gave verbatim reports of evidence given before the Select Committee. Trades' Councils, like that in Loughborough, promoted the changes through advertisements and notices in local publications.[274]

The effect of holidays with pay was not simply confined to payment of wages whilst on leave. Another important issue was the payment of contributions towards health and unemployment insurance. A number of test cases from Morris Motors Limited and Pressed Steel went before the court of referees in August 1938. After a three hour session the local court of referees decided that neither group of workers were entitled to unemployment benefit during the holiday period, no matter how small the holiday payment received. Although the Ministry of Labour ruled that the men concerned were on holiday and therefore in employment, no health or unemployment stamps were put on their cards for the two weeks.[275] Therefore, by the ruling of the Umpire alone, the Unemployment Insurance Act was suspended, creating fears that should a worker undergo a long period of unemployment, the loss of those two stamps might have made it impossible to get unemployment pay.[276] The Oxford Trades and Labour Council urged the TUC to take action immediately on the question because of its potential disaster for the whole working class.

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[273] Holidays For All, op cit, p3

[274] Loughborough Guide, No 236, Thursday 3 August 1939, MSS 292/114/3

[275] Letter from L J Bush, Secretary, Oxford Trades and Labour Council, to Sir Walter Citrine, 30 August 1938, MSS 292/114

[276] Ibid

Nearly ten million workers were still without paid holidays in 1939, according to a letter from the Resources and Economic Department of the TUC, in answer to a question from Gloucester Labour Party.[277] The situation was clarified to the National Federation of Building Trade Operatives in 1940, by the TUC in the following statement-

> Actually the Holidays with Pay Act of 1938, did not give effect to the recommendation of the Committee on Holidays with Pay that "During the Parliamentary Session of 1940-41 legislation be passed making provision for holidays with pay in industry generally". The 1938 Act made provision for Holidays with Pay to be enforceable only in the Trade Board trades, agriculture and road haulage.[278]

The more pressing issues of the Second World War prevented any immediate further progress towards paid leave for all workers.

The success of this legislation, enabling working people to have the financial means, as well as the time, to take a holiday away from home, was dependent on the prior existence of an adequate supply of accommodation. This had to be both affordable for those of moderate means and compatible with their tastes. The next chapter will look in detail at working-class demands for accommodation and the efforts of working people to secure a suitable place to stay whilst on holiday.

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[277] Letter from TUC Resource and Economic Department to J E Walsh, Gloucester Labour Party, 10 August 1939, MSS 292 114/3

[278] Letter from the Assistant General Secretary of the TUC to R Coppock of the National Building Trade Operatives, 12 August 1940, MSS 292 114/3

CHAPTER 6

PUT UP OR PUT UP WITH? - ACCOMMODATION FOR WORKING CLASS VISITORS

6.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapters we have seen how throughout the years from 1850 to the Holidays with Pay Act of 1938, a growing minority of workers had managed, by various initiatives, to obtain a break from the routine of work.[1] In ever increasing numbers they enjoyed a stay away from home, typically at the seaside. The Holidays with Pay Act and the ensuing rush by employers and unions to get holiday arrangements in place by voluntary agreements to pre-empt legislative interference, meant that from 1938 onwards, the numbers anticipated to seek accommodation by the coast were expected to excede all previous records, perhaps doubling the existing figures.[2] In 1938, a large proportion of the eleven million people who as yet had no entitlement to paid leave and their families were expected to join the fifteen million holidaymakers of 1937 very soon.[3] In this chapter, the changing features of holiday accommodation for working-class visitors, in response to their changing tastes and expectations is examined. The type of accommodation used by workers was both culturally and economically determined,

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[1] Four Million workers received payment for holidays in 1937, according to "Holidays" - a study by the National Council for Social Service, Oxford University Press, 1945, p3

[2] Planning - Planning for Holidays, a Broadsheet issued by PEP (Political and Economic Planning), No 194, 13 October, 1942, p5

[3] Donald Chapman, Holidays and the State, The Fabian Society, 1949, p8

visitors needed to feel at ease and pay a price for rent or board that they could afford. For the middle-class tourist, the choice made of accommodation was no less determined socially, although cheapness and accessibility from home were not the main considerations. Social distance was maintained even on holiday. The different classes rarely rubbed shoulders, segregation was upheld through both physical distance and pricing. As the working-class presence grew in existing resorts like Blackpool, visitors of the middle class based their holiday in the more select North Shore development or in Lytham St Annes.[4] Even in places of entertainment, such as theatres and music halls, segregation was maintained through higher ticket prices in certain seating areas. More distant coastal areas, such as Devon and Cornwall, began to be favoured by the middle-classes, away from the trippers and less affluent holidaymakers, who could afford neither the travel and accommodation costs, nor the time involved in travelling to places further afield. Along the coast of North Wales, prices of accomodation as well as the "social tone" of resorts rose in progression from Prestatyn, through Rhyl and Colwyn Bay to the dignified Llandudno.[5] This relationship between social tone and physical distance from the urban, industrial towns is not entirely simplistic. Harold Perkin, discussing the "social tone" of Victorian seaside resorts, gave as an example Scarborough and Skegness, both a similar distance from the West Riding, yet very different in the

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[4] Harold Perkin, "The "Social Tone" of Victorian Seaside Resorts", The Structured Crowd, Sussex, 1981, pp70-85, p71; John K Walton, The English Seaside Resort - A Social History 1750-1914, Leicester, 1983, pp22-25; James Walvin, Beside the Seaside, London, 1978, pp88-89

[5] Perkin, op cit, p72

class of visitor they attracted.[6] Skegness and other "lower" status resorts provided cheap amusements, beach entertainers, street traders and, by the end of the nineteenth century, cheap, spectacular entertainment for a mass market, financed by large capitalist enterprises.[7] In contrast, Scarborough provided genteel entertainment such as theatres and concert halls, in keeping with its earlier status as a spa, and also parks, gardens and beaches where admission was free and visitors not plagued by hawkers. In themselves, these differences do not explain why a resort offering peace and relaxation, not a commodity prone to commercialisation and additional expense, should be less popular with those with the least spending power than a place with countless trivial amusements to fritter away hard saved cash. The providers of cheap entertainment did not create the demand for their products or force working people to choose this kind of holiday over another. Most working-class visitors actually preferred to congregate in resorts frequented by other people from their own background and community, whose tastes in entertainment and accommodation were similar to their own.

6.2 Workers' Experiences of Lodgings up to the Great Exhibition

The development of working-class holidaymaking, with the amount of those travelling and staying away from home increasing throughout the period under discussion, was matched by a corresponding development of the accommodation sector to meet workers' needs and demands. The major

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6 Ibid, pp74-75

7 Ibid; see also Walton, op cit, pp22-25

expansion of working-class holidaymaking anticipated after the Holidays with Pay Act could never have been a viable proposition without the existence of suitable places for the tourists to stay. At the beginning of the period under study, in the years immediately preceding the Great Exhibition, accommodation for the poorest travellers was in "low and filthy lodging-houses", where both sexes were huddled indiscriminately together. Manchester police statistics for 1846 recorded 109 lodging-houses where men and women slept together and 91 mendicant lodging-houses. This kind of low quality acommodation was not peculiar to Manchester but was even more common in London, Liverpool and Glasgow and in the lodging-houses frequented by the travelling poor along the main roads of England.[8] This sort of place would only have been used as a necessity when travelling or newly arrived in a town as a migrant. Residents of these lodging houses, the very poorest section of the working class, would not have regarded themselves as guests or on holiday and so would have been looking for the cheapest possible arrangements.

A very early description of holiday accommodation offered to working-class people is given by Richard Ayton in his "Voyage Round Great Britain" written in 1813. After walking from Manchester, bringing their own tea and sugar with them, visitors paid ninepence a day each for their lodgings in Blackpool.

> A single house here and not a large one, frequently receives a hundred and twenty people to sleep in a night: five or six beds are crammed into each room, and

[8] Margaret Hewitt, Wives and Mothers in Victorian Industry, London, 1958, p55

> five or six people into each bed; but with every art of packing and pinnioning, they cannot all be stowed at one time: those therefore, who have the places first are roused, when they have slept through half the night, to make way for another load - and thus everyone gets his night's rest.[9]

At Southport, accessible from Manchester after a canal was completed to only five miles away in 1821, haylofts were let out at a shilling a head as sleeping rooms without any bedclothes except horse cloths or straw.[10] For many poorer workers their own homes may not have been much better.

Apart from these lodgings and descriptions of houses of call for tramping artisans, advertisements for visitors to the Great Exhibition provide some of the earliest insights into the commercial provision of lodgings for the working class. These were lodgings associated with and servicing the tourism industry rather than travel as a necessity. Although hastily provided at short notice, this accommodation possessed many of the features which have prevailed in the accommodation sector of the tourism trade ever since, particularly within that section catering for the working-class market. These features included an attempt through the Royal Commission's sub-committee,[11] at

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9 Richard Ayton, Voyage Around Britain, 1813, quoted by Morris Brooke Smith, The Growth and Development of Popular Entertainment and Pastimes in the Lancashire Cotton Towns, 1830-1870, MLitt Dissertation, University of Lancaster, 1970, p131

10 C Aspin, Lancashire First Industrial Society, 1969, quoted by Morris Brooke Smith, op cit, p131

11 Circular of the London Central Registry Office for House Accommodation for Visitors to the Exhibition of the Works of All Nations, London, 1851

setting minimum standards and matching supply with demand, rather like a modern local tourist board; a fixed or inclusive system of pricing; the availability of communal activities and entertainment; giving help to guests with orientation in their temporary surroundings; offering advice on how to get the most out of the stay and information on local attractions; ensuring the provision of familiar foodstuffs; providing a host or representative to assist and help with any difficulties caused by unfamiliar local ways; keeping costs down through bulk purchase of accommodation; and organising some form of staggering or regional segregation. This consideration was all linked to an extreme paternalism. Even so the heavy demands were met and a range of places to stay, calculated to meet the needs of working-class visitors, was made available. For most of these people it was the first time they had been anywhere as a tourist and so they would have had no prior expectations or pre-existing standards of what boarding accommodation ought to be like. Even for the middle classes, hotels were a relatively new concept, associated with rail travel rather than tourism or holidays although this was to change during the next decades. The upper classes preferred to stay as guests in private houses rather than lower themselves by staying at an inn.[12]

At the end of the Exhibition season the temporary hostels and boarding houses reverted to their former or intended uses. These were the first experiences of being a paying guest for the majority of working people visiting London. The type and standard of accommodation available would have influenced future demand and expectations of what boarding

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12 Eric Hobsbawm, The Age of Capital 1848-1875, London, 1962 (1995 edition), p203

ought to be like in seaside lodgings. This has been the case in more recent times when British boarding houses have found the need to provide en suite facilities for working-class guests who had experienced this standard of provision on Mediterranean package holidays and then expected and demanded to find facilities of equal quality when taking holidays in Britain.[13] These experiences and demands have also led guest house owners to install radio and television, central heating and fitted carpets in even the most basic of accommodation. The type of accommodation demanded and expected is a reflection of the social and cultural environment of the working class.

The descriptions of early working-class lodgings clash remarkably with the expectations of the middle class. For them, holiday arrangements were indicative of a completely different social and cultural milieu. One which reinforced the nuclear family rather than the extended or the wider community. Exclusivity not collectivity was important. Locations were not chosen for their cheapness or proximately to home. Indeed, once workers began to frequent resorts, like Margate and Blackpool, popular with affluent sectors in the early nineteenth century, middle-class travellers went elsewhere, often further afield or in more expensive suburbs of existing towns. As the railway opened up and expanded existing resorts to the inhabitants of the urban, industrial hinterland, wealthier tourists preferred to make longer journeys to quieter more "select" seaside towns and villages beyond the reach and pocket of the working class. Even so, the middle-class family on holiday would not have been a group made up exclusively of that class. Household servants

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13 J Christopher Holloway, The Business of Tourism, (Third Edition), London, 1989, p51

were part of the group, maintaining the mother's freedom from domestic labour and childcare at the seaside just as at home. This could have an effect on future working-class holidays, as when servants married and left service they would have had a template of what a respectable family holiday ought to be, creating higher aspirations for some individuals within this sector.[14] Some families rented an entire house for several weeks during the summer, run by their own staff. An upper middle-class girl in the early years of the twentieth century, Esther Stokes, travelled every year to Cornwall by train in a coach her family had to themselves.

> We were very excited about the journey for two reasons, one was that we always had tongue sandwiches… and the other was it was the only time we saw the maids without their caps. All the maids went with us and the caretakers would move into the London house.[15]

Travelling with servants meant that those hotels housing affluent holidaymakers needed to provide cheaper rooms for the household staff as well as luxurious ones for family members. Children often stayed in cheaper, nearby boarding house accommodation with their nannies and governesses,[16] seeing their parents only a little more on holiday than they did at home.

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[14] Oral reminiscence of former domestic servant and housekeeper, Winifred Feltwell, 1908-1984.

[15] Thea Thompson, Edwardian Childhoods, London, 1981, p137

[16] Christopher Hibbert, The English - A Social histroy, 1066 -1945, London, 1987, p636

As this work is concentrating on the specificities of working-class tourism, the remainder of this chapter will discuss how workers' cultural and economic circumstances created a type of holiday experience fundamentally different from that of more elite groups.

6.3 Company Houses, Apartments and Boarding

In the early years of the working-class presence at the seaside, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the expectations of accommodation were not high. For just one week of the year people were prepared to rough it in shared rooms and even shared beds during the busy August peak periods. Even in 1850, before the expansion of the resort's accommodation facilities, there were times when Blackpool was so crowded that, according to the Preston Chronicle of 20 July, railway carriages and the station were placed at the disposal of persons to sleep in, but in addition to this a great number had no option but to walk the beach all night.[17] For the working-class holidaymakers whose culture centred on immediacy, hedonism and collectivism, this was not such a major hardship as the point of the holiday was to be out enjoying oneself and having fun, either with the family or extended family or a group of friends.[18] The accommodation in itself was not especially important and provided merely a place to sleep. The seaside landladies themselves usually demanded that their guests be off the premises all day, returning only for mealtimes and, of course, bedtime.

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17 Preston Chronicle, 20 July 1850

Already, by 1870 a stereotype of a landlady or company house keeper had begun to emerge. Joseph Gutteridge, the Coventry ribbon-weaver, described his landlady in Bradford, where he was visiting the area as well as working temporarily at an exhibition, thus:

> Lodgings were found at the house of a middle-aged person. She was not of the ordinary vulture type of landlady, but had a kind and sympathetic face, and owing to lameness was unable to labour beyond household duties. I was so glad to find a place so much like home. She was a kind-hearted and cheery woman, towards whom I felt grateful for the many acts of kindness received while under her roof.[19]

He seemed pleasantly surprised that the woman did not live up to his prior expectations of "a vulture type of landlady". As there is no reference to his ever having stayed in lodgings or a boarding house before, then his preconception can only have been based on stereotyping not on experience.

Board in company-houses was usually provided on what was known as the apartments system. This type of lodging predominated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and survived as a minority provision up until the 1950s, when it was superseded by boarding-house facilities,

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18 Barrie Newman, "Holidays and Social Class", Leisure and Society in Britain, ed Michael A Smith, Stanley Parker and Cyril S Smith, London, 1974, p235

19 Joseph Gutteridge, Artisan and Master in Victorian Coventry, op cit, pp211-218

which were growing in popularity throughout the period. Guests would have a bedroom and catering would be a cross between self-catering and half-board. Holidaymakers described this as "board yourself" with bedding and attendance at a low price (around four shillings a night in the 1920s). "The woman of the house would cook the meat and so on. That was the attendance".[20] The guests, normally the wife, would purchase food, which the landlady would prepare and cook. This meant that even on holiday women were not free of domestic duties. This imposition on the leisure time of working-class women holidaymakers was not imposed by lodging or company house keepers as a means of social control but was a result of the lack of domestic labour-saving technology which would have given time to permit the landlady to shop, combined with the inability of working-class families to afford to pay the dearer rates of staying at hotels or boarding houses with servants to do the additional work.

For the proprietor of the cheaper class of company house, the expense of a servant's wages could be a considerable dent in the season's income[21] and make the difference between economic survival and bankruptcy. Hard-pressed and hard-up company-house keepers would provide basic items such as bread, milk and potatoes and hot water for making tea at an additional charge. Sometimes charges were even imposed for the use of the cruet.[22]

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20 A Leicester man's reminiscences, I Remember Leicester, "Holidays - Making the Most of Time Off", audio cassette tape, Leicester Oral History Archive, 1985

21 John Walton, The Blackpool Landlady, Manchester, 1979, p105

22 Walton, op cit, p3

> Mother went out after breakfast to shop. The landlady always supplied the vegetables... that's where she made a bit of profit. She charged about sixpence pence or a shilling a week for vegetables each day.[23]

This oral testimony from a man who was a youth in the 1920s, shows vagueness over the the actual cost, probably because he didn't pay himself or reflecting price changes over a number of years.

Although the apartments system infringed on the holidaymaking woman's free time it could also, especially in the busy, peak period, be extremely hard work and stressful for the landlady, especially one keeping costs to a minimum who couldn't afford a servant. The working day would be from five or six o'clock in the morning and often wouldn't end until after midnight. Guests could bring in food to be prepared and cooked at any time and doing the washing was a particularly arduous task. The landladies efforts did not go unappreciated as other oral evidence, this time from a woman, shows:

> I don't know how those women did it! They advertised apartments so much a night for the bed and you bought your own food and you had a section of the sideboard to put it in. And the woman would have a full house and she'd produce a nicely cooked meal. You know, there's Mrs So-and-So's beans and lamb and Mrs So-and-So's beef and Yorkshire pudding. How on earth they did it! It was very reasonable. There was your fare and I think

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23 A Leicester man's reminiscences, I Remember Leicester, "Holidays - Making the Most of Time Off", audio cassette tape, Leicester Oral History Archive, 1985

it was about five shillings a night for a double bed and a shilling for the cruet".[24]

Fortunately for the landladies, most working families followed a routine governed by factory hours, with set meal times which didn't vary very much even on holiday. The social environment of working-class life affected the time-table of daily life even away from work and the local community.

When catering for working-class visitors it was important to emphasise the homeliness and familiarity of the establishment. Accommodation needed to reflect cultural preferences. Gutteridge's remark "I was so glad to find the place like home", is indicative of this desire to feel at ease in familiar surroundings.[25] If guests felt comfortable then they might return to the same house year after year. Repeat trade is important in the tourism business which can then rely on some guaranteed business as well as new, attracted by word-of-mouth recommendation.[26] For this reason proprietors preferred the title company-house keeper with its connotations of friendliness, warmth and even respectability compared with the term lodging-house which conjured up images of accommodation for the poor and transients.[27]

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24 A Leicester woman's reminiscence, I Remember Leicester, "Holidays - Making the Most of Time Off", Leicester Oral History Archive, audio cassette tape, 1985

25 Gutteridge, op cit, p216

26 In the 1930s, 86% of tourists found lodgings through recommendation, 12% through advertisements and 2% through a travel bureau. James Walvin, Beside the Seaside, p117

27 Walton, op cit, p4

Despite its short-comings, the apartments system prevailed in most resorts oriented towards a working-class clientele until the 1950s when it was finally replaced by boarding houses which were fully catered with fixed meals and fixed costs. The main reason for the system's survival, as well as cheapness and lack of domestic technology, was that it was popular. Guests liked the freedom to choose their own food and to decide when and where to eat.[28] As already noted, familiarity of foodstuff was important to working-class travellers. Gradually, however, the apartments system gave way to the boarding house. Making their appearance in the late nineteenth century they were initially slow to catch on; in 1912 Scarborough had only about fifty and there were probably even fewer in Blackpool, the major resort of the working-class, although some company houses offered optional full-board. In the inter-war years, apartments were most popular in the North of England but in the Midlands and South full-board was preferred.[29] Boarding houses were the norm by World War Two but apartments survived into the 1950s as a minority taste.[30]

By the 1930s most providers of accommodation for the working-class visitor would have had access to labour-saving domestic appliances which would have given the landlady more time to plan meals, purchase food and service the rooms. The number of households with electricity had risen from

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28 Walton, op cit, p105

29 Elizabeth Brunner, Holiday Making and the Holiday Trades, Oxford, 1945, p10

30 Walton, op cit, p4

only one in seventeen in 1920 to one in three by 1930.[31] In December 1927, Good Housekeeping carried advertisements for thirty-four different light, cooking and heating companies, in addition to numerous firms selling washing-machines and vacuum cleaners and other "labour saving" devices.[32] Not only would this increased use of domestic electricity and gas have given the landladies better resources to cater for their guests, it would also have raised the standards and expectations of the guests themselves for whom taking a holiday and choosing their accommodation was as much an act of consumer consumption as purchasing the domestic appliances now available and with which holidaymaking would eventually, especially in the 1950s onwards, compete.

As boarding houses took over from apartment houses the demand for accommodation that was cheap enough for the increasing numbers of working-class holidaymakers with modest incomes was rising. As well as being too expensive for many working-class families, they were also not to the taste of many.

> Staying in a seaside boarding house meant sleeping in a small clean room with a wash stand in it. A jug of hot water was brought in the morning and another at night with the proviso that the wallpaper mustn't be splashed. The lavatory was shared by everyone and there was usually no bath. Bread and jam were served for breakfast, except on Sundays, when there was

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31 Catherine Horwood, "Housewives Choice - Women as Consumers Between the Wars", History Today, Vol 47(3), March, 1997, p25.

32 Ibid

> something cooked. At tea-time there was a hot meal, which was quickly served and eaten in silence.[33]

This gloomy picture was obviously not the unanimous experience of guests, most of whom enjoyed their holidays and frequently returned to the same resort and boarding house year after year. However if the weather was bad, precluding outdoor and beach activities, it could be miserable for families barred from their lodgings during the day except for meal times. If no indoor amusements or shows were available or were beyond the price affordable, families would huddle in the shelters provided on promenades or in ornamental sea front gardens, the lucky ones on seats, staring out at a rain drenched beach and rough grey sea and sky, hoping for a glint of sunshine on the blurred horizon. Parents would be under stress from the strain of trying to keep children with frustrated ambitions of sandcastle building and paddling amused whilst the youngsters themselves grizzled or were fighting the temptation to sneak outside to jump in puddles. If the house rules permitted guests to stay in, it could be equally unpleasant to try to keep bored children quiet so as not to disturb other guests or cause damage.

As the numbers enjoying a week away from home grew, either in the form of paid or unpaid holidays, not just more but alternative types of accommodation were needed to meet the demands of a wider working-class market. The apartment and boarding houses did not meet the needs of the lower paid who needed cheaper facilities than they were offered, or those with only a fixed amount to spend who needed to know the exact cost of the holiday, including entertainment, before

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[33] Sue Read, Hello Campers, London, 1986, p18

setting off. They also failed to meet the needs of those who desired more freedom from routine or the restrictions imposed by boarding house life.

6.4 Collective and Alternative Holidays Through Socialist and Working-class Organisations

Alternatives to the passivity of a boarding house holiday in a resort whose attractions were developed to exploit working-class culture had been sought ever since workers began going to the seaside in large numbers, not only from religious and temperance organisations but from within the socialist and labour movement itself. The commercialisation of leisure and its frivolous diversions from the advance of the working class, in terms of self-improvement or class struggle, was denounced by socialists and those concerned with the independent advance of workers.[34] As the nineteenth century progressed and with it the numbers of workers taking holidays involving a stay away from home, alternatives to commercial provision were also developed. These alternative social and cultural provisions, like many of the Great Exhibition's travel clubs, were rooted in the rational recreation movement. Alternative holiday provision tried to build on and develop the collective aspects of working-class culture and was the product of idealistically or philanthropically motivated organisations.

Although nominally socialist, the pioneer holiday camps were founded on idealist principles and had no direct relationship to the class struggle other than by offering an

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34 Chris Waters, British Socialists and the Politics of Popular Culture, Manchester, 1990, p27 and pp40-42

alternative to the low level of culture provided by the commercial sector. The mentors of the socialist movement in Britain in the closing decades of the last century were not simply in revolt against the injustices of Capitalism, they were appalled, like William Morris, by the "sheer damned ugliness of urban life".[35]

A loose federation of clubs and associations grew up around the Clarion newspaper, started in 1891 by Robert Blatchford.[36] This was a paper with a mass circulation within the working class, whose influence spread into the leisure time of its readers who became involved in a range of social activities such as choirs and cycling clubs. These clubs also had a political focus, members on cycling trips would dismount to distribute socialist literature and hold impromptu meetings, disturbing the sabbath in remote country villages.[37] The emphasis of the Clarion Fellowship was not on competition or commercialism but on comradeship and companionship. This was not new to the socialist movement, John Trevor's Labour Church Movement had also provided an alternative to the increasingly alienating cultural norms of capitalism.[38] Although nominally a church, the organisation concentrated more on fellowship than religion. The Labour Church -

> Extended the hand of ethical fellowship to all classes and creeds in a gospel of social amelioration,

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35 Colin Ward and Dennis Hardy, Goodnight Campers, London, 1986, p13

36 Ibid

37 John Belchem, Industrialization and the Working Class, The Englich Experience, 1750-1900, Aldershot, 1991, p228

38 Mark Bevir, Labour Churches and Ethical Socialism, History Today, Vol 47(3), April 1997, pp 50-55

celebrated in music and texts, religious, democratic and socialist.[39]

There were 54 Labour Churches by 1895, but thereafter they declined, those seeking fellowship preferring the more social atmosphere of the Clarion Clubs. The co-operative movement too had similar principles, not just confining activities to retailing and production but education and social fellowship. This type of organisation was not uniquely British, either. In Bismark's late nineteenth century Germany, worker supporters of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) joined in similar social and cultural activities; in a climate more hostile to the labour movement, these often became important forms of political organisation, allowing like minded individuals to meet in a country where openly political meetings were forbidden.[40] Particularly popular in Germany were gymnastics clubs and, in common with Britain, choirs, cycling and hiking groups.

In Britain, the desire to promote comradeship meant that these organisations made an important contribution to the development of holidays. The Co-operative Holiday Association (CHA) which originated in 1891, although not formally constituted and named until 1897, and its later offshoot of 1913, the Holiday Fellowship, both aimed to provide at a reasonable cost, holidays away from the commercialised resorts in more unspoilt areas with the emphasis on enjoyment, not through wasteful consumption, but fellowship and communal living. The stated objects of the CHA were:

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39 Ibid

40 Vernon L Lidtke, The Alternative Culture - Socialist Labor in Imperial Germany, Oxford, 1985

> To provide recreation and educational holidays by purchasing or renting and furnishing houses and rooms in selected areas, by catering in such houses for parties of members and guests, and by securing helpers who would promote the intellectual and social interests of the party with which they are associated.[41]

The CHA had been created through the inspiration of a Congregationalist minister, T A Leonard. He had organised holidays for his young congregation from Colne in Lancashire, which became annual events from 1891. Leonard resigned his pastorship and became the CHA's permanent secretary, having his office in leased holiday accommodation at Abbey House, Whitby. Leonard had hoped to provide simple holidays which poor people could afford.

The aim of the CHA was to promote better use of people's holidays.

> We offer them the healthful ways of an out-of-door life among the hills instead of the rowdy pleasures of popular resorts. We provide a homely life in our guest houses, and whilst discouraging extravagance in both food and dress, help people to find joy in music, literature, nature-study, and that best of all exercises, walking, with all that it brings to mind and body. And, most important of all, during those holiday weeks we establish the unwritten law of unselfishness, and find pleasure in serving each other's needs.[42]

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41 J A R Pimlott, The Englishman's Holiday, Hassocks, Sussex, 1947, p168

42 Ibid

In the first decade of the twentieth century, the CHA opened its first two continental guest houses at Dinan in Brittany and at Eiffel in Germany.[43] As the CHA grew to fourteen thousand members in 1911 and possessed thirteen holiday centres in 1913, Leonard grew concerned about its unwieldiness and what he perceived to be its growing conservativeness.[44] The committee of the CHA thought its future lay in providing good quality accommodation, whereas Leonard wanted to create new types of centres such as youth camps and mountain huts and other venues where arrangements could be kept as simple as possible. He hoped that this would bring holidays within the reach of poorer people. He also wanted to make contacts to promote international harmony and goodwill, just like the future Workers' Travel Association.

Many committee members felt Leonard's ideals were threatening the stability of the organisation when he insisted on these changes and in 1913 he resigned as secretary of the CHA and with a few friends formed the first committee of the Holiday Fellowship. The Holiday Fellowship developed three early camps for children at Staithes, Conwy and the Isle of Sheppey[45] but later developed camps for families as well. In common with the CHA, it included vacations abroad as integral to its work.[46] Both

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43 Holidays - A Study Made by the National Council for Social Service, 1945, p66

44 From the introduction to A list of the historical records of the Holiday Fellowship, compiled by Phillippa Bassett as part of a research project funded by the Social Science Research Council , Centre for Urban and Regional Studies University of Birmingham and the Institute of Agricultural History, University of Reading, August 1980

45 Ward and Hardy, Goodnight Campers, op cit, p31

46 Holidays - National Council for Social Service, op cit, p66

organisations (the Co-operative Holidays Association has now changed its name to Country-wide Holidays Association) continue to offer inclusive breaks based on their original philosophy of providing healthy holidays and encouraging love of the open air. They own properties in areas of natural beauty and offer fellowship not just while away but throughout the year with a programme of hiking and outdoor activities. Outdoor and special interest breaks are offered not just in the UK but abroad too.[47] The CHA and Holiday Fellowship were pioneers not just of holidays in the open - air but also the idea that they need for their full enjoyment, not only natural beauty, but the imponderable things of the human spirit - "laughter and the love of friends".[48]

The Clarion Clubs also gave to many during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, especially young people, the chance to experience a holiday in the open air on cycling and camping trips made in a comradely atmosphere. Although these clubs offered socialist recreational activity, for every individual who engaged in political work there were large numbers of Clarion Club members who did not.[49] The clubs' instigator, Robert Blatchford, claimed that he desired a "sociable" socialism, that he wanted "a family gathering, a brotherly - and sisterly, if you like - jollification, not a political conference".[50] It was difficult to strike the correct balance between entertainment and political work. The socialist activist

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47 Holiday Fellowship and CHA brochures, 1996

48 Holidays -National council for Social Service, op cit, p29

49 Chris Waters, British Socialists and the Politics of Popular Culture, Manchester, 1990, pp170-171

50 Ibid, p171

Tom Maguire, commented on this problem of reconciling the cultural activities of the converted with the necessary work of political organising. He complained that the social side of the movement was stressed too much:

> Political progress is not made after the fashion of a Corydon-Phyllis dance, jigging along... through pleasant places with the sun shining over us.[51]

In common with other organisations aiming to promote uplifting and intellectually satisfying leisure opportunities for working people, the Holiday Fellowship faced the problem of appealing not to workers but to more lower-middle class people, just as the Mechanics Institutes had done. A partial reason for this could have been, as Richard Holt argues, that most young workers before the First World War were unable or unwilling to use the trains or the bicycle to "get away from it all" as the middle-class youth did, although shorter cycling excursions became more common.[52] "Apprentices preferred a few days at the seaside in the company of their mates, drinking and chasing the girls, to invigorating walks over the mountains",[53] a barrier to the Holiday Fellowship fulfilling its objectives. Oral evidence from Leicestershire hosiery workers, though, suggests that quite a lot of young workers cycled to the seaside.[54]

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51 Tom Maguire, quoted by Waters, op cit, p171

52 Richard Holt, Sport and the British: a Modern History, Oxford, 1989, p196

53 Ibid

54 Interview with Neville Evans of Hinckley, 10 September 1997, Arquotex Textile Heritage Project

Up until the beginning of the First World War, the Workmen's Travel Club, an off-shoot of the mainly middle-class, student patronised, Toynbee Travellers' Club which flourished from 1889, organised an annual visit of three or four days to a continental city at a cost of about two pounds per person, a price within the means of most skilled workers of those days.[55] These clubs were based at Toynbee Hall, whose warden in the 1920s, J J Mallon was to become a founding committee member and organiser of the future Workers' Travel Association.[56]

6.5 Holiday Camps and the Labour Movement

Another means of providing alternatives to the rigidity of apartment and boarding house accommodation, giving more opportunities for relaxation to women holidaymakers while also meeting the need for an all inclusive price for those on restricted budgets were holiday camps. The labour movement played a leading and active role in their initiation, development and promotion. That a "Key element in the development of pioneer holiday camps is the contribution of workers' organisations" was acknowledged by Dennis Ward and Colin Hardy.[57] It was a member of the Clarion Cycling Club and the Independent Labour Party, John Fletcher Dodds, who opened the Socialist Holiday Camp at Caister in 1906. After a camping holiday near Caister with his two sons, Dodds determined to set up a camping ground there for socialists. It is also suggested, say Ward and Hardy, that he already owned the land there and that he

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55 Francis Williams, Journey into Adventure, London, 1960, p18

56 Ibid

57 Ibid, p35

opened the camp to offer cheap holidays to East Londoners. In 1906 Dodds and ten friends camped on the sea front at Caister. The camp was such a success that soon a thousand people were staying there each summer and by about 1911 canvas was being replaced by huts and chalets. In the early campsite, the tent dwellers, in the spirit of comradeship, sang songs around the campfire while the camp committee, many of whom were trade unionists, organised socials, dances, debates and lectures.[58] Although the holidaymakers lived communally, sharing the campsite chores, it was far from a socialist utopia. Cooking was still done by the women and men picked the vegetables in the camp garden. This, though, kept the costs down to a price affordable by an increasing number of workers.

Although the camp hoped to respond to the needs of working-class people wanting a holiday at a price they could afford, a large proportion of guests, especially after a change of name to simply the Caister Camp and the predominance of chalets over tents, were white-collar workers seeking freedom from the regimentation of the hotels and boarding houses of the time.[59] A Manchester woman recalled how her parents met at the camp while they were students in the 1920s, on holiday with their own parents.[60] The couple later followed white-collar occupations in the Inland Revenue. Tents were not entirely replaced with huts and in 1939, when a week's stay at the camp cost two pounds and five shillings, the back to basics style camp offered a choice of accommodation in wooden huts or bell tents set out in neat rows. Evening entertainment was still self-

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58 Ward and Hardy, Goodnight Campers, op cit, p 15

59 Ward and Hardy, Goodnight Campers, op cit, p16

60 Oral reminiscence of Judy Paskell, 1997.

initiated. Someone usually produced an accordion and led group sing-a-longs of the popular hits of the day.[61] Even on the journey to and from the seaside, campers exhibited the holiday spirit, as they travelled on the "Norfolk Camp Express", a special train service to Caister and Hemsby provided by the London and North Eastern Railway, inaugurated in 1934, to match the popularity and demand for holiday camps.[62] "In addition to the usual holiday equipment many of the holiday makers provided themselves with ukeleles and other "musical" instruments, and before trains left Liverpool Street concerts were in full swing which vied in volume if not in musical precision with some of the best of the BBC jazz band broadcasts".[63]

Although not the first holiday camp, Cunningham's Young Men's Camp on the Isle of Man of 1894 owns this accolade, the Caister Camp was one of the first aimed at families rather than young men or children only and was neither religious nor philanthropic. By 1939 it was competing with commercial camps like Billy Butlin's three year old one at Skegness and his newly completed facility at Clacton. Faced with this competition, Dodd's camp maintained its clientele, part of an ever expanding market due to the growth of paid holidays. The camp was still family run, J Fletcher Dodd and his wife lived in an imposing bungalow on the site and though he chatted with residents, by then he seemed to take little part in the day-to-day running of the enterprise.[64] By 1949 every taste in sport was catered for, the camp had a

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61 Mr Eddie Doughty, Leicester Mercury, June 27, 1996, p10

62 London and North Eastern Railway Magazine, Vol 24, No 7, July 1934, p384

63 Ibid

64 Mr Eddie Doughty, Leicester Mercury, June 27, 1996, p10

resident band and weekly cinema shows just like the commercial sites. Its advertising slogan, in response to criticism of the supposed regimentation at Butlin's, boasted

> Everything is provided, from the energetic round of sport to a quiet cosy armchair and a favourite book. You can do as you please. There is no regimentation at Caister.[65]

Apart from during the war, despite name and ownership changes, the camp has been in continuous use for over ninety years.

Not all the early camps were run on an ideological basis. In the years after the First World War especially, other privately owned holiday camps, inspired by the Caister Camp, such as Potter's at Hemsby opened in 1920,[66] were established. For them the objective was unashamedly for their guests to have fun. The section of the coast between Yarmouth and Lowestoft, in 1934, was styled "Holiday Camp Village" by a porter at Hopton-on-Sea station in 1934.[67] Around Hopton were five of these self-contained resorts with accommodation for 1,100 visitors. In order of size there was the 18 acre, Constitutional Holiday Camp and Beach Club, with accommodation for 450 guests, which advertised itself as the most luxurious camp on the East Coast. The Golden Sands Camp and Club was set in 20 acres of grounds that contained a luxurious club-house and could accommodate 250 visitors. Potter's new Cliff Camp, "every hut with a sea

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65 Ward and Hardy, Goodnight Campers, op cit, p16

66 Ward and Hardy, Goodnight Campers, op cit, p28

67 J H Reeve, "Holiday Camps", London and North Eastern Railway Magazine, Vol 24, No 6, June 1934, p334

view", could take 175 visitors while the original Potter's Camp catered for 125. The White Hart Camp could welcome 85 guests.[68] The LNER's Suffolk Camp Express carried holiday revellers to the area.[69] Ths Socialist Camp had had an influence far wider than just within socialist circles.

Continuing labour and working-class organisational involvement in these developments, both the co-operative and trade union movement were active in the creation of holiday camps. The claim to having "quite by chance set going what is now a very big and flourishing industry in Britain - the Holiday Camp industry", was made not by Billy Butlin but by W J Brown, the general secretary of the largest clerical union, the Civil Service Clerical Association (CSCA).[70] When a parent of young children, he had experienced the "purgatory" of a seaside boarding-house holiday in wet weather and at the same time he had memories of a holiday as a young man at Caister Holiday Camp in the discomfort of a bell tent. There was no water close at hand and candlelight was the only means of lighting. The food was poor and the countryside bleak.[71] In the early 1920s he had the following idea:

> Suppose that instead of a bleak field we could have wooden chalets, with running water and electric light. Suppose we could have a recreation hall for dancing, concerts and the rest. Suppose we could have a place where, wet or fine, the children could make all the noise they liked, in circumstances where they wouldn't

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68 Ibid

69 LNER Magazine, Vol 24, No 7, July 1934, p384

70 Ward and Hardy, op cit, p43

71 Ibid

upset the adults who wanted quiet? Surely this would be a vast improvement on the seaside boarding house?[72]

Brown's inspiration led to the opening in 1924 of the Corton Camp owned by his own company, the Civil Servants' Camp Association. With the approval of the CSCA Union Executive Committee, he had found an ideal site of landscaped wooded gardens owned by Jeremiah Colman (of mustard fame). Brown's ambition was for the proposed holiday camp to be a co-operative venture run by his union on non-profit making lines. The union however felt the enterprise too risky.[73]

Not to be thwarted in his ambition, Brown got together with some friends to raise a few hundred pounds between them. Association members were then asked to take up shares at a pound a piece at five per cent, which only managed to raise another £240. Having failed to raise the funds through his association, Brown was forced to approach the chiefs of government departments who lent fifty pounds each. Enough money was raised to justify the erection of the camp, which gave the security to allow borrowing the balance from the bank. The camp was built at a cost of thousands of pounds, and at great personal risk to Brown and his friends rather than as the purely co-operative effort he had intended. He was still advertising shares for sale to members in the union magazine Red Tape only a month before the camp opened.[74]

Despite the difficulties selling shares, there was no trouble selling the holidays. Bookings came in quickly for

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72 W J Brown, So Far, London, 1943 quoted in Ward and Hardy, op cit, p43

73 Ibid

74 Red Tape, February 1930, quoted in Ward and Hardy, op cit, p 44

the summer of 1924 at two pounds and two shillings a week for adults and half price for children under twelve. By the following season, holidaymakers were being turned away and Brown began to look for a second site. One was found at Orchard Lease Estate on Hayling Island which opened in 1930. The new camp was built to an even higher standard than at Corton, with detached huts instead of ones arranged contiguously in rows. Red Tape magazine declared that the camp had "secured the maximum of comfort for everyone consistent with not destroying the essential feeling that one is a camper and not a mere resident in a hotel or boarding house".[75] During the 1930s the original camp was greatly improved and enlarged to take two hundred guests at prices hardly above their 1920s' level. When the Civil Service Clerical Association held their annual conferences at Corton, Brown was completely vindicated and reminded delegates of how they had been sceptical about the idea of the camp when he had first suggested it. These holiday camps, styled "luxury" by Brown, originated over a decade before Billy Butlin opened his first camp at Skegness, so Brown can be justified in his claim that his camps were the precursors of the modern holiday camp industry.

Another public sector union which opened its own holiday camps was the National Association of Local Government Officers (NALGO). In occupations not famous for their trade union militancy, it was recognised that services provided by the union could attract members. Holiday centres were not NALGO's first venture into holiday provision. The union already possessed a holiday cottage in Wales and in 1912, hired out a whole hotel in Montreux for two months, subletting rooms to members at a price lower than commercial

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75 Ibid

rates. The inclusive cost for this two week Swiss holiday was £9 17s 6d.[76] This involvement in leisure, beyond workplace issues was a legacy from the Liverpool Municipal Officers' Guild, founded in 1896, a forerunner and constituent of the national union formed in 1907.[77] The Guild had a holidays and excursions section which became a big scale travel agency. Every year, it chartered steamers to take up to 2,000 members and friends to Llandudno. One year the Guild organised an eight day trip to Paris and in another it organised a cruise of twenty-three days duration, to Portugal and the Canary Islands at an all-in charge of £10 each.[78]

At NALGO's 1930 conference a resolution from the Manchester branch was passed calling for the union to build a holiday camp for the benefit of its members.[79] A committee chaired by a sanitary inspector from St Pancras, W G Auger, found a newly built commercial camp in a beautiful location at Croyde Bay in Devon. Auger negotiated a sale with the owners for £12,000, a thousand pounds less than the asking price, plus £428 for stock. The camp with 95 asbestos huts, a recreation room, dining hall, tennis court, putting green, garage, electricity plant and even its own artesian well was opened to members on 2 April 1931 under its original management team who came along with the undertaking.[80]

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76 Spoor, op cit, p101

77 Spoor, op cit, p16

78 Spoor, op cit, p15

79 Alec Spoor, "White Collar Union - 60 Years of NALGO", London, 1967, pp107-108

80 Ibid, p108

The venture was so successful for NALGO that the following year, the conference resolved in a motion put by the National Executive Committee (NEC) to fund a second camp in the north. Within two months, after inspecting ten sites, the committee purchased land at Cayton Bay near Scarborough. Building began before the end of the year on a camp to NALGO's own specification. At a cost of £25,000, it had 124 wooden bungalows, accommodating 252 visitors, a dining hall, recreation room, billiards room, card room, bowling green, children's playground and a beach bungalow.[81] The new camp opened in July 1933. The Croyde accommodation was upgraded to brick bungalows with hot and cold running water in 1937 and a concert hall with stage and dance floor were added. It was several years ahead of any other camp in the country according to NALGO's NEC. A particular innovation of NALGO was that they were the first to use the title "Holiday Centre" rather than "Camp".[82] The Croyde Bay Centre was extremely popular and by the 1950s profit from there was subsidising the one at Cayton. After years of deliberation, the Cayton Centre was sold to another camp operator for £100,000 in 1976.[83] It survived until the 1990s but the site, in 1997, was disused.

The two examples of trade union involvement in the holiday camp business above were by white-collar, public sector workers' organisations. This sector of the labour market enjoyed holidays with pay by custom and practice at a time when this was a provision offered only to a minority of workers. For Local Government employees, holiday entitlement, agreed through the National Whitley Council for

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81 Ibid, p108

82 Ibid, p109

83 Ward and Hardy, Goodnight Campers, op cit, pp 45-47

the civil service by 1920, was twenty-four working days for the lowest grades up to forty-eight for the highest.[84] This may have been a factor in the decision to go into the schemes and certainly contributed to the success of the ventures.

An example of trade union involvement in holiday provision by a manual union is that of the Derbyshire Miners' Association (DMA) who built their own camp near Skegness. Thanks to the success of a scheme to provide payment during their holidays (described in Chapter Five), the camp, the inspiration of Hicken, a DMA leader who negotiated the "holidays with pay" agreement, was built thanks to a £40,000 grant from the Miners' Welfare Fund and some contributions from the coal-owners. It was opened on 20 May 1939 by Sir Frederick Sykes, the chairman of the Miners' Welfare Central Committee, who in his speech, said:

> I do not think there is any other non-profit making camp of its kind in the country. It is a pioneer venture which is being watched with close interest.[85]

The centre housed almost a thousand visitors in chalets for families and cubicles for single visitors with their meals taken in a large five hundred seater communal dining hall.[86] There were concerts and dances every night. The cost of this holiday was thirty-three shillings a week for a couple and eight shillings and sixpence for each child over four years of age. In its first year 15,000 miners and their families took part in this pioneering venture specifically

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84 CPSA Annual Report 1919-1920; Spoor, op cit, p84

85 J E Williams, The Derbyshire Miners, London, 1962, p629

86 Ibid

for industrial workers, assisted by a special arrangement with the railway companies for reduced fares from Derbyshire to Skegness.[87] For most of those mining families using the newly opened camp, it would have been the first time they had been able to enjoy a week's holiday by the sea in their lives.

Other unions and organisations of the working class have been active in the provision of holiday facilities for their members. Many own or owned seaside properties used as convalescent homes for members in need of rest after illness or injury. In the 1920s and 1930s Ernest Bevin, Herbert Elvin and many other trade union officers and activists had been leading supporters of the Workers' Travel Association. There was some discussion in the trade union movement as to whether or not unions should run their own hotels for members. Scarborough and District Trades Council wrote to the TUC in July 1938, drawing attention to a resolution carried at a recent meeting:

> In view of the increasing numbers of workers enjoying holidays with pay, this Council calls upon the Trades Union Congress to consider proposals for the affiliated unions to own hotels in the various seaside health resorts. This Council realises that the workers are dependent upon the anti-labour Boarding-house and hotel keeper, and that, only by the trade union movement owning and controlling the means of accommodation can the workers' needs be satisfactorily met.[88]

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87 Ibid

88 Letter from R E Hardy, Secretary, Scarborough and District Trades Council, 10 July 1938, MSS 292/114/3

The sentiment behind this policy and the efforts of workers' organisations to provide holiday accommodation of various kinds, was entirely in keeping with the recommendations of the IFTU Taylerle Resolution of 1929, which emphasised that trade unions should establish holiday homes with the aid of state and public bodies.[89] The pseudo-marxian phraseology of the resolution is interesting as it refers to the "ownership and control of the means of accommodation", although this probably says more about the political composition of Scarborough Trades Council than the views of the working-class in general. The phrase also echoes the words in the Labour Party Constitution calling for the facillitation of "a great development of the means of recreation",[90] as discussed in Chapter One. The Secretary of the TUC's Organisation Department wrote in response to this letter from Scarborough and District Trades Council, giving the position of Congress.[91] The TUC's view was that at that moment:

> The holidays with pay movement had not resulted in an influx to the seaside and other residential places and that a capital expenditure that would be required would be out of all proportion to the number of members who could be accommodated at such an hotel.[92]

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89 Taylerle Resolution, Draft Resolution on Holidays for Workers and Salaried Employees, for the Executive Meeting of 22 May 1929, (TUC), MSS 292/114/1

90 Chris Waters, British Socialists and the Politics of Popular Culture, Manchester, 1990, pp154-155; see Chapter One of this work, p81

91 Letter from Secretary of the Organisation Department of the TUC to Mr R E Hardy, Scarborough and District Trades Council, 16 August 1938, MSS 292 114/3

92 Ibid

The letter to Scarborough Trades Council goes on to describe how in the previous year, 1937, at the request of the General Council the Workers' Travel Association had placed six Centres at its disposal for young Trade Unionists at prices which were one pound a week lower than their advertised list. The Secretary writes of how:

> We circularised all Unions and Trades Councils on this matter, but were unable to secure sufficient applications to fill one Centre, much less six, and in the end the WTA had to absorb them into their own programme. In view of this failure any suggestion of hotels run by Trade Unions themselves would appear too premature.[93]

In 1937, the year of this experiment, the Holidays with Pay Act was a year away from being passed into law. At the time the letter was written, the benefits of the Act had not yet come into effect. Optimism about the future expansion of workers' holidays remained high though, as in 1939 the TUC's Joint Council had proposed a venture to provide holiday camps and boarding houses for union members in conjunction with the Workers' Travel Association.[94] This initiative was, according to Francis Williams the historian of the WTA, curtailed due to the start of the Second World War. When peace returned, trade unions carried on their involvement in providing seaside accommodation. The Transport and General Workers Union had centres that could be used for holidays or conferences built at Eastbourne, Conwy and at Ayr in the

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93 Ibid

94 Francis Williams, Journey into Adventure, London, 1960, p138, Ward and Hardy, op cit, p 41-42

1970s,[95] demonstrating the continuity of this involvement through the years.

The first co-operative movement holiday camp was the Roseland Summer Camp overlooking Rothesey Bay in Scotland which took in its first guests, sleeping in bell tents, in 1911.[96] Although not in England, this camp was an inspiration to co-operative societies south of the border. Influences from other camps were instrumental again here. The president of the Renfrewshire Co-operative Conference Association, John Dewar was keen on camping because of his experience of the Volunteers' camps and he was supported by fellow Renfrew co-operator and Cunningham's Camp visitor, John Paton, in his campaign for a co-op camp. A farm at Roseland came on the market which the Renfrewshire Association and the United Co-operative Baking Society leased initially for six months. Camp style holidays were not new to the Baking Society members; they had had a holiday club since 1899 and in 1908 had sent twenty-five young people to the YMCA[97] camp at Ardgoil.[98] The Roseland Camp was such a success in its first season that the farm was purchased for six hundred pounds and improvements to the water supply and communal accommodation were made with the aid of a loan of a thousand pounds. When the camp reopened in 1913, the marquee housing the dining and communal area had been replaced by a permanent structure which could cater for several hundred campers. In the interests of efficiency the Baking Society took sole ownership and charge of the

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95 T&G Centre, Eastbourne, Brochure, 1989. TGWU Centre at Conwy, TGWU Centre at Ayr, promotional leaflets, c1990

96 Ward and Hardy, op cit, p36

97 ie the Young Men's Christian Association

98 Ward and Hardy, op cit, p36

camp. After requisitioning during the First World War, the camp gained from further improvements and chalets catering for up to four hundred were built. The camp was popular for decades amongst Scottish co-operators but, following mergers between the Baking Society and the Scottish Co-operative Wholesale Society and again with the Co-operative Wholesale Society in 1973, finally closed down in 1974.[99]

Another successful, early co-operative movement camp, belonging to the Coventry Co-operative Society, was at Voryd (or Foryd) near Rhyl.[100] The original 1930 camp consisted of six sleeping huts, an old railway coach, an ex-army hut, two dozen square tents and some old bell tents. Although a new venture for the society, the camp was not its first delve into camping holidays. The year before a small group of its members camped in the Peak District over the Whitsun holiday. Following this experience one of the campers, Tom Snowdon, urged the Society's education secretary to find a permanent site for annual camps. This provided the impetus for the finding and renting of the seaside site at Voryd. The initiative was an immediate success and by July it was announced that there was no accommodation available for the last week in July or first two weeks in August. This success led the education committee to persuade the management committee to purchase the field and to build about sixty chalets there as well as leaving space for people to pitch their own tents.[101] In the true spirit of co-operation, the camp was run on a non-profit basis from the education committee's share of the trading surpluses in

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99 Ibid

100 G C Martin, Working-class Holidaymaking Down to 1947, MA Thesis, University of Leicester, 1968, p77

101 Ward and Hardy, op cit, p37

Coventry and its grant from the CWS. Campers cooked their own meals with the camp supplying primus stoves, pans and crockery. The site had a shop operated by the Rhyl Co-operative Society which donated the dividend to the sports and entertainment fund. To help society members to pay for their holidays at the camp, the Coventry Co-op sold savings stamps in its stores and some members used their "divi" towards the cost.[102]

The site fulfilled all its original objectives of providing cheap holidays for workers although it was later to suffer from its non-profit making ethos as not enough income was generated to carry out repairs and the redevelopment needed to bring it up to modern standards. The site was eventually closed and cleared in the 1970s.

During the 1930s, the CWS embarked on a new project in partnership with the Workers' Travel Association (WTA). The two organisations had many connections; at one time three CWS directors had sat as members of the WTA's management committee. The partners formed Travco Camps Ltd and in 1938 the purposely designed and built Rogerson Hall Holiday Centre, accommodating five hundred people, was opened at Corton in Norfolk. The centre was named in honour of Cecil Rogerson, the founder and first president of the WTA. The Travco Camp incorporated modern design features typical of the 1930s. Great thought was put into the design and its size was limited to catering for five hundred guests, the maximum size, it was believed, to ensure that the camp remained friendly and intimate without losing any sense of

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102 G C Martin, Working-class Holiday Making Down to 1947, op cit, p77, The Wheatsheaf, Coventry, August 1930

community and not becoming regimented like many of the larger camps were judged to be.[103]

For the WTA it was important to provide holidays in beautiful surroundings whether they were natural or man made. With this in mind it sponsored an architectural competition for holiday centre designs. The design for Rogerson Hall had a central block with a lounge, dining hall, dance floor, a library and a shop. The bedroom block had single, double and family rooms. The grounds contained tennis courts, swimming pool, paddling pool, bowling and putting greens. Building costs for this triumph of functional art-deco design were very high so no more centres of this type could be provided. In its first season Rogerson Hall was so successful that 4,870 visitors were received and more than a thousand had to be turned away.[104] Travco later went on to build on this success by opening a second camp at Westward Ho! in Devon. They had also planned a further collaborative development with the proposed name of Travco Hotels.[105]

The holiday camps, those of the co-operative and socialist pioneers and their later commercial successors offered communal holidays combined with glamour and luxury. They enabled families, including the married woman, of moderate means to enjoy the seaside without any domestic burdens, and brought entertainment to the holidaymaker without him or her having to go out and look for it and then pay extra to get it. Unlike that of the middle-class holidaymakers, childcare was communal or shared, not privitised and

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103 Francis Williams, Journey into Adventure, London, 1960, p137

104 Williams, op cit, p137

105 Holidays - National Council of Social Service, op cit, p60

individual, with each family having the exclusive attention of a nanny. This type of holiday offered no opportunitiy for elitism or individuality, unlike those typically preferred by the middle-class. Everyone was expected to join in. Unfortunately, those camps under commercial management were too expensive for the mass of the people, even though their inclusive charge covered a great deal of free entertainment and the use of many facilities, thereby saving on spending money. The total number who went to them was small in comparison with those who stayed in apartments and boarding houses.[106]

Although war put any further development of holiday centres on hold, within the financial year of 1946-47, the WTA opened five new holiday centres including Trebovir Court in London, Dunraven Castle in South Wales leased from the Earl of Dunraven and Killerton in North Devon, which had been the home of the Acland family since 1768.[107] Like the years after the First World War, this post-war period saw a change in land use and much property changed hands as the great country houses and estates became a relic of an earlier age, often because inheritors were unable to meet death duty taxation.[108] In 1947 the WTA also opened a holiday camp of its own on the South Coast, Rustington Lido which was renamed Mallon Dene after J J Mallon, another long servant and original committee member of the WTA. Travco Hotels, the same partnership of WTA and CWS, had also been formed in 1945. The Travco partnership did not last. At the Annual Conference of the Co-operative Union, the CWS resolved that

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106 Holidays - National Council of Social Service, op cit, p12; Planning, PEP, op cit, p12

107 Francis Williams, op cit, pp144-6

108 Planning, PEP, op cit, p12. Chapman, op cit, p3

it ought to operate a complete travel service of its own on the same lines as the WTA, thus posing a conflict of interests as well as outlook.[109] In the circumstances, the inevitable ending of the partnership meant that the WTA gave up its interest in Travco Hotels and the Westward Ho! camps, but became solely responsible for Rogerson Hall and Mallon Dene.

Speaking on the subject of holiday camps in November 1938, Mr Smith of the London Co-operative Society said:

> There is a great need for organised holidays. The people now for the first time getting holidays with pay are used to a routine job, and their recreation is of the mass-organised kind. More camps are necessary where amusements are provided all the time.[110]

6.6 Working-class Ambassadors - The Workers' Travel Association and Package Holidays

Providing holidays in Britain was a move in a new direction for the WTA. Its original intention was to contribute to internationalism and peace by enabling ordinary workers to visit other countries. As part of this aim the intention had been to make travel possible for people for whom the ordinary tourist agencies did not cater. The WTA, according to the former manager of Leicester Co-op Travel, was the

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109 Francis Williams, op cit, pp144-6

110 Elizabeth Brunner, Holiday Making and the Holiday Trades, Nuffield College, Oxford University Press, 1945, p16

first to offer all-in holidays abroad.[111] Using its labour movement connections, it organised many trips abroad at prices lower than any other organisation. It had been a major sponsor of the Youth Hostels Association which provided cheap places for young people to stay. It was not entirely inconsistent with its objectives for the WTA to embark on the provision of cheap family holidays in Britain for groups that could not afford even the most modest of boarding houses. Nevertheless these people had, by the WTA's standard of social values, the right to expect something better than was offered by the cheaper commercialised and sometimes excessively large and regimented holiday camps. These were in any case too expensive for many working-class families.[112]

The Workers' Travel Association originated in 1921 in the inspired idealism of Cecil Rogerson who at that time was a minor official in the League of Nations Organisation (LNO) in London. His idealism was not matched by practicality and the LNO decided that it could no longer employ him, but as a gesture of goodwill sent him to Geneva to look after a British group visiting the International Labour Office. Sitting beside the lake, with representatives of workers' organisations from many countries, Rogerson was possessed:

> Of a vision of the ordinary workers of many lands visiting each other, coming to know each other, forging

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111 Mr Albert Lynn, former manager of Co-op Travel, Leicester, started work 1929, "I Remember Leicester" Oral Histroy Cassette Recording, C32 The Travel Agent, leicester oral History Archive.

112 Francis Williams, op cit, p137

> out of their understanding for each other's lives such bonds of peace as should never again be broken".[113]

This idealism was entirely consistent with the feelings of many in those early days after the Great War had ended. The establishment of the League of Nations and its popular support typified this sentiment. In her autobiographical work, "Testament of Youth", about her experiences of the War and its aftermath, published in 1933, Vera Brittain described the League as:

> That international experiment in the maintenance of peace and security which I felt, in common with many other students of modern history, to be the one element of hope and progress contained in the peace treaties.[114]

Back in his hotel room, Rogerson composed a Draft Convention for a Labour Travel Association. Its objectives were to promote foreign travel by workers and facilitate social intercourse among them and with other nations; to support the real ideals of the League of Nations and the ILO; and to strengthen the Labour Party by additional ties of co-operative effort and friendship.[115] Other members of the party in Geneva were impressed by this draft. They included a number of influential figures in the labour movement such as Harry Gosling who was to become the first president of the WTA, Duncan Carmichael who was Secretary of the London Trades Council, and some trade union leaders such as J W Bowen, General Secretary of the Post Office Workers' Union.

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113 Francis Williams, op cit, p15

114 Vera Brittain, Testament of Youth, London, 1978, p538

115 Ibid

The WTA always had close links with the labour movement although the name Labour Travel Association was shunned in order to present the organisation as non-politically affiliated. Despite its non-political stance, the WTA's founding members and committee members were all well-known in the trade union and labour movement. A letter asking for support for the embryonic organisation signed by a number of trade union leaders as well as Gosling of the Transport and General Workers' Union, newly formed through mergers, was drawn up. These included John Turner of the Shop Assistants, Herbert H Elvin of the National Union of Clerks and Administrative Workers and A S Walkden of the Railway Clerks Association plus J J Mallon of Toynbee Hall and Cecil Rogerson himself.[116] This letter asking all those interested in promoting world understanding by international travel to attend a Conference at Toynbee Hall on 25 November 1921 was sent to more than seventy organisations. The invitation generated a considerable amount of interest. Among the many letters of support received came ones from Ernest Bevin, Arthur Pugh, John Baker of the Iron and Steel Federation, Margaret Bondfield the future Minister of Labour, J Bromley of the Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, Arthur Henderson and F W Pethwick Lawrence. This level of support was not echoed in the actual attendance of the meeting at which only a few of those invited were able to attend. Fortunately the few who did attend were very enthusiastic and became the provisional committee of the new association.[117]

Early in 1922 Rogerson produced the first circular announcing the WTA's ambitious initial programme of trips. This publicised programme was actually extremely over-

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116 Francis Williams, op cit, , p22

117 Francis Williams, op cit, pp21-22

ambitious. Easter tours to Belgium and the battlefields and summer tours to Belgium, France, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Italy and Sweden were promised at prices ranging from five to eight pounds per week.[118] In reality the only trip actually organised was a Whitsun visit to a Chateau in Normandy which promised the sharing with guests of beautiful things and friendly hospitality from the lady owner. The extremely low charges (even by 1922 standards) of five pounds for one week or eight pounds for two, covered return fares from London, accommodation, meals, excursions and everything else. Even those modest prices were too high for most of the workers the WTA wished to introduce to foreign travel. In this first party were a bus driver and one or two skilled industrial workers but the majority were clerks and a few trade union officials and teachers. It was their first trip abroad for all of them, which in itself was regarded as a success by the WTA, although it had hoped to attract more industrial workers. The trip to Normandy did not turn out as planned, Rogerson was supposed to travel with the party as its guide but owing to pressure of work could not spare the time due to the volume of bookings coming in. Meals promised during the journey to the chateau failed to materialise and when they arrived, tired and hungry, in the small Normandy town where they were supposed to be met by their host, no-one came for them.[119] They had to find their own way on foot to the chateau, seeking directions from locals. Accommodation, which had been promised in comfortable dormitories in the luxurious surroundings of the chateau, turned out to be in a dormitory rigged up in a stable block and private rooms nothing more than cubicles formed with wooden partitions. They slept on

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118 Francis Williams, op cit, p35

119 Ibid

camp beds with straw mattresses. Exquisite French cooking turned out to be frugal, mostly black bread and bean soup.[120] However the guests made the most of the trip and stayed. It seems likely that in his enthusiasm for the social purposes of what the WTA was doing, Rogerson had not conveyed the right impression of the kind of living standards British workers were accustomed to, or the kind of holidaymaker who would be catered for.

During this first season the WTA received many knocks as holidays did not match up to publicised expectations or the aspirations of the travellers. A party visiting Brittany complained that their hotel was derelict, dirty and instead of the promised sea-view, all they could see was the town jail.[121] Two days before the departure of the first party booked for Paris, it was discovered that Rogerson had completely forgotten to book accommodation of any kind for it. There were numerous difficulties, many caused by Rogerson's impractical nature and the need to improvise as bookings flooded in. Complaints were received regarding lost luggage, overcrowding in the student hostels and third rate hotels in Berlin and Vienna, bad food, poor beds and general inefficiency.[122]

The WTA's tourists must have enjoyed their holidays despite the disappointments relating to accommodation, which after all was secured at the cheapest possible cost, as the number of bookings continued to increase. The organisation had discovered a genuine demand from those of limited income to travel abroad on all inclusive tours. It had taken the

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120 Francis Williams, op cit, p38

121 Francis Williams, op cit, p39

122 Ibid

first faltering steps in a social revolution in holidaymaking that was to take thousands of ordinary people abroad and show that, even for those with very little money and no knowledge of foreign ways or languages, the world need not end at the Cliffs of Dover. The WTA was primarily established to promote personal contact between workers of all countries on a reciprocal basis of holiday travel as an aid to peace.[123] In its first year the WTA had handled 700 holiday bookings and 1,996 in its second. By 1925 the Association had had over six thousand bookings and its turnover was more than £45,000. By 1939 the turnover had reached a phenomenal £595,000, dropping suddenly due to war in 1940 to only just over £94,000.[124] But economic success was not the main concern of the organisation whose priority was not only with making foreign travel available for those for whom earlier agencies had not catered but with widening political and social horizons in order to increase international understanding.[125]

Although foreign travel for workers in order to educate and promote understanding was the objective of the organisation, by 1927 the value of holidays for their own sake was becoming more accepted and the WTA opened its first UK holiday centre at Heacham on the Norfolk coast. The Co-operative Movement helped to build up the WTA through the patronage of its members and promotion through its travel agencies, to the point where it was feared by Thomas Cook and Son Ltd as a rival.[126] The organisation had local

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123 Holidays - National Council for Social Service, op cit, p29

124 Francis Williams, op cit, p141

125 Francis Williams, op cit, p64

126 Mr Albert Lynn, oral tape, op cit

fellowship and rambling groups that helped generate repeat business and gain customer loyalty.

The organisation continued to grow right up until the outbreak of the Second World War by which time it was the largest agency and the only one catering specifically for working-class travellers. There was a grand total in 1938-39 of 62,579 bookings.[127] In July 1939, just weeks before war broke out, 21,998 Continental bookings were received (3.5% up on the preceding year), and three-quarters of the way through August with war only hours away, the WTA had already passed the highest figures of preceding years in Continental departures.[128] This was partly due to the increase in paid holidays and the passing of the Holidays with Pay Act the previous year. The Act itself was passed thanks to the support of the TUC with evidence presented by, among other union representatives, Bevin, a staunch supporter of the WTA who later became its president.

In the post-war years, the WTA continued its expansion after a hiatus during war time, although its skill and expertise in organising transport and familiarity with foreign travel enabled it to play a part in the rescue of many refugees from occupied Europe. The organisation was also represented on committees preparing Government commissioned reports, such as that of the Catering Wages Commission.[129] As well as its overseas trips the association continued to expand its provision of holiday facilities within Britain, not only

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127 Elizabeth Brunner, op cit, p14

128 Francis Williams, op cit, p128

129 Report of the Post-war Holidays Group to the Catering Wages Commission, September 1944; Holidays - National Council for Social Service, op cit

developing its own guest houses but making booking arrangements with privately owned hotels and guest houses. It also acquired an interest in a coach company and devised a wide programme of activity holidays. All this additional activity was made possible by the almost universal application of holidays with pay. However as the self-image of the working class evolved with the coming of a mass-consumer society the name Workers' Travel Association lost its appeal and some even felt stigmatised by the name. Travellers didn't like luggage labels with the brand "Workers' Travel Association" printed on. Due to this "terrible snobbery", according to Leicester Co-op Travel Agency manager, Albert Lynn, the organisation lost business because of its name.[130] For that reason the association changed its name to Galleon Travel (after the picture on its logo) in the early 1960s. Galleon Travel was taken over by Kennedy Brookes PLC in 1984 and was no longer owned by the WTA Trust, which maintained a small shareholding. This was bought out in 1988 when Kennedy Brookes was taken over by Trusthouse Forte.[131]

The main achievement of the WTA, apart from introducing foreign travel and later providing reasonable cost UK based holidays for working people, was the offering of a low inclusive price for an all-in foreign holiday, an overseas package tour. This was repeating the experience of the travel clubs catering for workers visiting the Great Exhibition and was later copied by many other travel organisations. This innovation of the package tour, really

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130 Mr Albert Lynn, oral tape, op cit

131 Colin Doyle, Project Manager, Employment and Corporate Affairs, CWS Ltd, Mancester, (employee of Galleon Travel, 1981-87), Letter to S Barton, 16 May 1990

did make the world seem safer and easier to move around in to many people over the years who would not otherwise have dared or afforded to venture beyond their own shores. The WTA set out to break down insularity and widen understanding of other peoples. It sought to overcome not just the economic barriers to travel but also the psychological ones, such as fear of the unknown, prejudice against foreigners, fear of strange food, fear of being made a fool of, or even a victim, in a strange land with a strange language.[132] The groups led by leaders or tour guides who could cope with the language and unforeseen problems, made the Continent less intimidating, travellers could feel safe and secure in what was, to most of them, a very new and potentially dangerous adventure. The all-in price satisfied the need of those of moderate means to know exactly what their holiday would cost so that they could fit it in to narrow budgets.[133]

Popular and fully subscribed as these alternative holidays were, they were only ever taken by a small minority of workers. Although the purpose of these organisations was to enable more of the working class to benefit from a holiday combined with enriching experiences and comradeship by providing low priced holidays, they were not very successful in this objective. Bookings came mostly from lower middle-class and better paid clerical workers who were attracted by value for money prices and perhaps the more intellectual environment offered when compared with commercial holidays. This prevented working people on low incomes from benefiting from them because the holidays were all snapped up early by better-off people, with deposits at the ready, who were

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132 J C Holloway and R V Plant, Marketing for Tourism, London, 1988, pp6-8

133 Francis Williams, op cit, p157

already accustomed to taking holidays and who might have afforded to pay more.[134] The majority of clients were single people or older couples. Families with children under fourteen made up no more than ten per cent of the total and fourteen to eighteen year olds comprised only between five and ten per cent.[135] Even so, Albert Lynn, the travel agent, said the WTA was well patronised by working-class people, as well as working-class movement and trade union activists, because it offered terrific value for money.[136]

6.7 Independent Working-class Holidaymakers - The Rural Idyll, Planning and Control

The apartment, boarding house or holiday camp vacation did not suit all workers' tastes or pockets. Increasing numbers of people sought independence and a break from organised routine on holiday, preferring their own or a rented self-catering holiday home. Most people, however, lacked the means to purchase or rent their own holiday home in a desirable location. For some the desire overcame the lack of financial resources; they achieved their ambitions by building their own, sometimes by erecting a hut or placing caravans, old railway carriages or buses on plots of marginal land by the sea or in the countryside which was either squatted or purchased very cheaply. This was in response to the lack of provision of other accommodation that members of the lower classes could afford.[137] All along the coast, particularly on the South and East, developments

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134 Elizabeth Brunner, op cit, p 20

135 Holidays - National Council for Social Service, op cit, p30

136 Albert Lynn, oral tape recording, op cit

137 Philip Wren, Holiday Shanties in Britain: A History and Analysis, a dissertation prepared for Hull School of Architecture, Nov 1981, p5

of huts, "chalets," and later caravans appeared, providing a second home for those with little financial means which could also be rented out to neighbours, friends or family who could not afford boarding-houses or holiday camps. Springing up mostly between 1919 and 1939,[138] by the 1930s the rural idylls of their owners had become a great worry to those concerned with the preservation of the coastline, public health and planning. Conflicts arose regarding access to the beach where development blocked pathways or occupied large areas of the sands or dunes.[139] Many of these "holiday homes" were on wheels, (although they did not move for years), in order to avoid rates. Whole fields were packed with them in unsanitary conditions. Moreton in the Wirral's bungalow town was described by its Medical Officer of Health in 1926 as "beggaring description".[140] It contained 150 bungalows in all stages of disrepair, bounded on one side by a foul-smelling stream and on another by a ditch of stagnant water which was almost pure sewage[141]. In many places these holiday homes were described as ugly and misplaced shacks, almost worse than the industrial areas from which their inhabitants came. A settlement at Flamborough Head was described as one of the worst by J A Steers of the Geography Society in his coastal survey of 1944. There he claimed "a whole town of hutments had completely ruined the scenery of that fine chalk headland".[142] In North Wales there was an unsightly spread

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138 Dennis Hardy and Colin Ward, Arcadia for All, London, 1984, p4

139 David N Robinson, The Changing Coastline, Twentieth Century Lincolnshire, ed Dennis R Mills, Lincoln, 1989, pp 155-180, p161

140 Ward and Hardy, Arcadia For All, op cit p36

141 Ibid

142 J A Steers, Coastal Preservation and Planning, Geography Journal, 104, 1944, pp7-27, p11

of shacks between Point of Air and Prestatyn. Miles of the Lincolnshire and Norfolk coasts were disfigured by long lines of jerry-built wooden erections. Other "eyesores" were noticed along the Holderness, Essex and South-east coasts. Canvey Island and Jaywick Sands were holiday estates, with some permanent residents.[143] These were created by private enterprise, by an individual buying an area of land which was subdivided and resold in small plots to other individuals on which to construct their own habitations.

The construction of a second or holiday home was not confined to the seaside. The countryside around the major cities was also a popular location for innovative self-builders. For instance, since 1920 many Leicester people have had the pleasure of a second home next to Swithland Woods in the Charnwood Forest area of the county. A Leicestershire resident recalled that in its early days the camp site, which was enjoyed by her family, had a small group of bell tents and bivouacs.

> Our tent had its superior points. The floor boards were raised so that no rats could nest underneath. Other people were not so wise, and our fox terrier was much in demand when floor boards were lifted. He could desptch ten rats in as many minutes, as they ran out. We also boasted that our food was kept cool in a zinc container, buried in the ground. But pride goeth before the fall! One day the pigs came, removed the cover and ate the lot. Water was carried from the farm across a field - of course we had a yoke.

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143 Ward and Hardy, Arcadia for All, op cit, p86

> A most important day arrived when we were allowed to build wooden bungalows. Parafin stoves and Elsan toilets were coveted improvements. In the dark evenings in September we kept the fire burning with pine cones and wood collected from the spinneys. Many bungalows were built until five fields were occupied. Most people staked out a lawn.
>
> Good order was maintained on the site by the camp committee. Two events were arranged by these men: the "Sports" on Bank Holiday Monday and the "end of season supper".[144]

The speaker, Leslie Sherwood's family bungalow was built by her mother. The bunglows, or rather wooden huts, built by the pioneers in the 1920s are still in use today.

These plotland developments, as they were dubbed, were characterised by the lack of any overall planning and provision of services as well as their location on land marginal to normal economic and domestic activity because of its poor quality for agricultural purposes or liable to flood. The sand dunes and other coastal strips fall into this category. Falling land prices owing to a decline in agricultural profitability in the inter-war years, led to a rush to sell land and there were few prospective buyers for farms.[145] Ward and Hardy, in their study of these plotland developments, describe these sites as:

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144 Leslie Sherwood, A Second Home in Charnwood Forest, Living History - The Newsletter of the Living History Unit, Number 20, Leicester, Spring 1998

145 Ward and Hardy, Arcadia for All, op cit, p21

> Offering a place in the sun for the enterprising if not the rich; a landscape put together on the cheap, a manifestation by poor people of the fashionable trend for a place in the country. Plots of land were bought cheaply and sometimes, through squatting, acquired at no cost at all.[146]

Land offered for purchase was subdivided into small plots which were the quickest and easiest to sell. Although they were sold cheaply, the aggregated cost of a field divided into plots was usually much more than its worth as a whole.

Coincidental with and facilitating this pattern of demand for building holiday and weekend homes was the availability of cheap materials to enable their development either for individuals or as camps with accommodation for letting out. During the interwar years railway companies were shedding out of date rolling stock. The sturdy Victorian corridor railway carriages were ideal for conversion to holiday homes. A carriage could be delivered to your site for as little as fifteen pounds and provided a ready made "chalet" which could be built upon and improved over the years.[147] Army huts from the First World War were another popular source of ready made accommodation. A valuable form of temporary accommodation for use while the potential occupant was building a hut were bell tents, also military surplus. In the days before green-belt restrictions and the Town and Country Planning Act there was very little that could restrict the growing abundance of such ramshackle, unplanned sites which came to an abrupt end with the introduction of effective planning legislation in 1947 although, obviously

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146 Ward and Hardy, Arcadia for All, op cit, p2

147 Ward and Hardy, Arcadia for All, op cit, p3

the expediencies of war time between 1939 and 1945 had curtailed, and very often caused to be removed, existing coastal plotland developments.

This kind of holiday development of individual huts and caravans appealed to a growing number of working-class families trying to break through the limitations of income and lack of accommodation to acquire their own form of holiday cottage. It appealed to the independently minded, to whom communal life did not appeal.[148] This individuality was echoed in the way these makeshift developments actually spoiled the seaside experience for others who were deprived of the use of sections of the beach because one family monopolised the space or blocked the pathway to it. This lack of collectivity seems to be the opposite of the ideal holiday offered by the workers' organisations which tried to incorporate communal activities and the idea of sharing in the philosophy behind their provision, although many developments had committees and had to campaign for amenities and sometimes even the right to remain, creating a collective organisational experience. However it does seem to have had something in common with earlier popular movements. Ward and Hardy identify these as "pastoralism" with its call back to an age of lost rural bliss and to an affinity with Nature; the other, "agrarianism", with its ideal of peasant proprietorship and of reclaiming land which had been wrongly appropriated in times past.[149] These two outlooks coalesced in the plotland developments which were symptomatic of an anti-urbanism. This interest in "Back to Nature" was idealised and strengthened by such writers and political theorists as William Morris, Kropotkin and the

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148 Holidays - National Council for Social Service, op cit, p24

149 Ward and Hardy, Arcadia for All, op cit, p24

Chartist Feargus O'Connor with his land campaign in the 1840s. This was not entirely a symptom of individuality with its bourgeois overtones; many socialist leisure activities also focused on the enjoyment of nature, such as the rambling and cycling groups and campers under canvas who wished to enjoy the natural environment and open air. However, they did not attempt to claim ownership of the countryside and coast or deprive others of its use. The socialists' desire to share in it was a sign of their being against private property which deprived the majority of the right to share in the beauty of the world.

The Lincolnshire coast, with its sandy beaches and dunes was particularly vulnerable to unplanned development. Until the 1920s, most holidaymakers travelled by rail to the resorts and as the area was well-served by trains. The sandhills near Mablethorpe and Skegness on the East coast were very popular.[150] At Mablethorpe the owners of land adjacent to the coast claimed they automatically owned the sandhills and beach above the high-water mark. Some parts of it they let out to the Urban District Council who re-let it to amusement caterers at rents which increased as the trippers came in. In 1912 the owners took the initiative to let it directly to the caterers themselves. This alarmed the Council who had lost a source of income and in 1914 it obtained an Act of Parliament by which it acquired ownership of the sandhills. In one of the ensuing disputes over title before the Court of Appeal in 1918 it was judged that the owners of adjacent lands did not have an automatic right over ownership of the sandhills, but that possible title could be obtained as a

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150 John D Sheail, the Impact of Recreation on the coast: the Lindsey County Council (Sandhills) Act, 1932, Landscape Planning, 4, 1977 pp53-77, p55

result of exercising acts of ownership over a period of at least twelve years.[151] The effect of this was to encourage "inlanders" elsewhere to enclose and build on the dunes by erecting fences and bungalows, in order to acquire title as quickly as possible, in effect by squatting. Bungalows, shacks, caravans, old bus bodies and railway carriages appeared wherever a track gave access to the sandhills and seashore.

That large profits could be made from hiring out holiday homes and camping sites to working-class families was soon realised by the owners and this conferred value on the sandhills. Chapel St Leonards was transformed from three farms and an inn to a flourishing seaside-orientated centre within five years. At Anderby Creek houses were built on top of the dunes and bungalows erected at Soldiers Hole. Camps appeared at Ingoldmells and by 1921 at Bohemia near Sutton on Sea. The Trusville Holiday Camp of caravans at Trusthorpe also dates from this time. In a newspaper of 1932 happy holidays were advertised in sea front farm bungalows with every convenience for long and short periods at Trusville. The advertisement was placed in the name of a private individual named Henshaw whose address was given as on the site. At nearby Mablethorpe, Bourneleigh building estate offered separate chalets, a lounge and free tennis and use of beach hut.[152]

Not all developments involved the occupation of sandhills or the beach. These latter two advertisements were for sites on the land immediately behind the beach and there seems to have been some attempt to create a less ambitious holiday

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151 Robinson, op cit, p160

152 Leicester Mercury, 3 May 1932

camp at Bourneleigh with the addition of some leisure facilities. This unfortunately was not always the case. Bohemia was a development of circular corrugated iron huts, fifteen feet in diameter with a living room and bedroom. These "Osocosy" huts for two people were double lined for insulation and had a stained wood floor. They were let furnished with electric light, water supply, oil stoves, linen, crockery and cutlery. Apart from their contents and, of course, the insulation, these huts sound very similar to those in the Kent hop-fields, described by George Orwell.[153] Rents, in the 1920s, ranged from fifteen shillings a week from October to March up to two pounds twelve shillings and sixpence in August. There was no sanitation or drainage however and the earth closets of Bohemia and other such developments were regarded as a health hazard by the County Medical Officer of Health.[154]

The case of a hotel carpark on unenclosed land at Sutton on Sea triggered an investigation into the ownership rights of the sandhills in 1927. This and the other developments which were restricting traditional rights of access to the beach through the sandhills for the public in general led, in 1930, to the promotion of a Parliamentary Bill by Lindsey County Council to grant powers to preserve all the sandhills and beaches between Donna Nook and Gibraltar Point as open spaces and to regulate future development. The Bill was passed in 1932. As a result of this "Sandhills Act", by 1937 seventeen areas had been designated, forty-eight new huts were on the controlled sandhills at Mablethorpe and

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153 George Orwell, "Hop Picking", Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell, Vol 1, "An Age Like This", 1920-40, London, 1968, p63

154 Robinson, op cit, p160-161

Sutton and about thirty at Anderby Creek, Chapel St Leonards and Ingoldmells. About five hundred acres of land were purchased from about 130 owners for over £35,000 the camp sites at Huttoft and Ingoldmells were acquired and the caravans evicted.

This Act of Parliament was a unique piece of planning legislation in the coastal zone. It introduced a system of licences in the Lindsey coastal area covering some forty kilometres in length and up to five hundred metres in width, representing the longest such area in a natural state in Britain. In spite of the great demand for holiday development which led to the erection of all manner of shacks and huts, the Council was able to designate controlled areas where it could prohibit or remove buildings and enclosures through a licensing system. It could also zone areas for different land uses and acquire land by compulsory purchase for five years after the Act came into force. The Council under the direction of its clerk, Eric Scorer, although at first reluctant, bought as much land as possible before the power of compulsory purchase ceased in 1937[155]. At Bohemia holiday camp, the eastern part was incorporated into a controlled area and ten of the "rusty pork-pie" huts were demolished at a cost to the council of £4,750 in compensation payment for disturbance. The rest of the camp was allowed to remain as the owner of the camp had invested so heavily in it over the preceding ten years.[156]

The cases against these holiday huts, calling for their clearance, indicates another example of elitism regarding

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155 Sally Scott, The Early Days of Planning, Twentieth Century Lincolnshire, ed Dennis R Mills, Lincoln, 1989, pp 181-211, p200

156 Sheail, op cit, p63

accommodation and a clash of class culture and values. Although to middle-class observers these settlements were "eyesores" which "beggared description", they were perfectly acceptable to their working-class creators who took pride in their properties which often they had made themselves. The accusation that they barred access to the beach to others was true but upper and middle-class property owners prevented or restricted access to far greater areas of land along the coasts and in the countryside.

The Council's Sandhills Sub-committee prioritised the more vulnerable parts of the coast around Mablethorpe and Skegness with the aim of regulating the most popular areas for holidaymaking. It acquired camp sites at Huttoft and Ingoldmells Points, evicted the caravans and employed the county architect to design new camp layouts. Unfortunately the breaking out of war before much progress was made led to the sites being requisitioned for military purposes.[157] The Sandhills Act did not put an end to all development; huts and caravans, providing low-priced holidays, would still be encouraged on most of the hills, as a hut near the beach was part of the charm of a Lincolnshire seaside holiday.[158] Nowadays, although the Lincolnshire coastline is covered with caravans and chalet parks in the fields immediately behind the dunes, the sandhills themselves are free from all development apart from the pathways to the beach.

The 1932 Sandhills Act enabled the County Council to control the growth of caravan and camping facilities between the main resorts in the years after the Second World War. The Town and Country Planning Act of 1947 curtailed ramshackle

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157 Sheail, op cit, p66

158 Sheail, op cit, p63

development of holiday huts throughout England but left a loophole which could be exploited by owners of sites for immobile caravans. The fact that a caravan has wheels left it exempt from many of the controls which applied to similar structures without wheels, for example holiday huts and shanties.[159] It wasn't until more recently that the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act of 1960 brought a new licensing system into force to control the location of sites.[160] The number of static caravans between Cleethorpes and Skegness rose from 4,200 in 1950 to 11,000 in 1959, 18,600 in 1969 peaking at 21,000 in 1974 when eight per cent of the UK's caravans were sited on that part of the coast. Over a third of these were at Ingoldmells. There were 2,500 chalets at Humberston, Mablethorpe and Sutton on Sea, 3,000 (including 1,700 for self-catering) at Butlin's and 500 at the Derbyshire Miners' Holiday Camp.[161] These figures, all for self-catering holiday accommodation, are illustrative of the demand for cheap holidays by the working class after the Holidays with Pay Act came into real effect after the war. Later many of the traditional boarding houses would be converted into self-catering holiday flats.

6.8 Conclusion

All these different types of accommodation provided for the working-class market, although differing widely in the

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159 Philip Wren, op cit, p15

160 Philippa Bassett, a List of the Historical Records of the Caravan Club of Great Britain and Ireland, compiled as part of a research project funded by the Social Science Research Council, Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, University of birmingham and the Institute of Agricultural History, University of Reading, 1980, p vi

161 Robinson, op cit, p175

content of the product offered, have one thing in common. The price was kept to a minimum, which for working-class holidaymakers was a primary consideration when making the choice of where to go, if at all. While the middle classes went further afield, often to escape the increasing crowds of workers on holiday, they were quickly replaced in many resorts by the people they sought to evade. For working-class families, moving up one to accommodation they could not previously afford was a sign of increasing affluence and declining exclusivity of the holiday. The numbers taking holidays grew continuously during the inter-war years. Between July 1922 and July 1934 the number of advertisements for holiday accommodation placed in the Leicester Mercury increased by more than a dozen times, from only eleven entries in the column in 1922 to 135 in the equivalent dated edition of 1934.[162] In one year alone, the number of small advertisements for holiday accommodation more than doubled, from sixty-three in 1932 up to one hundred and thirty in 1933.[163]

For the majority a week away in even the most modest accommodation was out of the question before the Holidays with Pay Act. The holiday for them was a day trip by train

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162 The sample was taken from the following newspapers, Saturday editions for the first week in July over a fifteen year period. The figures in brackets refer to the number of advertisements offering accommodation in the Seaside Appartments, Lodgings and other holiday accommodation column. Leicester Mercury, 8 (7) and 15 July 1922 (11), 4 July 1925 (28), 2 July 1927 (21), 6 July 1929 (23), 5 July 1930 (35), 4 July 1931 (59), 2 July 1932 (63), 1 July 1933 (130), 7 July 1934 (1135), 6 July 1935 (102), 4 July 1936 (72, comprising 41 Boarding Houses, 16 Apartments and 15 Hotels), 3 July 1937 (76, comprising 20 Hotels and 56 general Holiday Accommodation).

163 Leicester Mercury, 2 July 1932, 1 July 1933

or charabanc to the seaside or to a local place of interest. For Nottingham families, in the 1920s and 1930s, this might have been a trip to the "Bridges", which was a day out by the River Trent including a boat trip to or from Clifton.[164] The poorest families relied on charitable efforts to provide a holiday treat for themselves or for just the children.

The intervention of working-class organisations in the provision of accommodation had a double innovatory effect. First of all it enabled more people, especially families, to enjoy a holiday away from home at a moderate price. Secondly it set standards and expectations for the facilities provided by accommodation providers. As the wealthier holidaymakers began to take holidays abroad or, with increased ownership of private motor cars, drove further afield to more remote locations away from the crowds to either hotels or privately owned villas by the sea, the working-class holidaymaker's leisure facilities owed little to individual private ownership, except in the case of the huts or caravans by the coast, which were so despised by the middle class for their squalor and blight on the landscape. Travel for working people was normally by public transport and accommodation was rented. Where organisations of the working class became involved in the provision of holidays, the relationship between the holidaymaker and provider changed, from one of entrepreneur and consumer to mutuality as facilities were collectively owned or shared. This was the "ownership and control of the means of accommodation" as Scarborough Trades' Council had described it,[165] or the means of production in the tourism industry.

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164 Oral reminiscence of Pauline McClelland, Leicester, 1999

165 Letter from R E Hardy, Secretary, Scarborough and District Trades' Council, 10 July 1938, op cit

By 1940 the minimum cost of a week's holiday for a family with two children was about ten pounds (including home rent), still too high for many to contemplate. By the end of the 1930s only a third of those who earned less than four pounds a week took a week's holiday.[166] The National Council of Social Services 1945 report put the cost of a holiday at thirty-five shillings a week for an adult with reduced charges for the children. For a family with three children it was estimated that a holiday could be obtained for six to seven pounds a week, that is about ten or eleven pounds a week including fares, rent and home charges.[167] The inclusive charges per person at commercial holiday camps ranged from about two pounds ten shillings per week. The charges at holiday hostels run by voluntary associations such as the WTA and Holiday Fellowship at this time were about two pounds per week except at especially cheap centres where the price was about thirty-five shillings a week. The average family could therefore achieve its holiday, at minimum prices, if it saved about three shillings a week throughout the year.[168] Sadly, there wasn't enough cheap accommodation to allow all those who might have wanted a holiday to take one.

Commercial holiday camps were usually too expensive for most people, even those receiving holidays with pay, although they would have solved the problem of what to do with the children inherent in an apartment or boarding house holiday, especially during bad weather. Buying food, cooking on a

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166 Ward and Hardy, Arcadia for All, op cit, p24

167 Holidays - National Council for Social Service, op cit, p11

168 Planning for Holidays, Planning, A broadsheet issued by PEP (Political and Economic Planning), no 194, October 13, 1942, p 13

self-catering holiday and childcare were all problems that meant that for working-class women even a week away from home was not entirely a holiday. Because of the huge rise in demand, the growing attempts by the trade union, co-operative and workers' movements to provide a real holiday at an all-in affordable price was not an available option for most families because of the small scale of these ventures and the fact that many people who could afford to pay more booked up all the places before the poorer aspiring holidaymaker could get the money together. In 1945 the National Council of Social Service could report in its study on holidays that "three things seem in the past to have prevented working-class families from going away for a holiday: lack of means, lack of accommodation other than seaside apartments, and lack of ideas, or natural conservatism".[169]

During the Second World War, as state and official involvement in all areas of life became acceptable to the public, a number of officially commissioned reports emphasised the potential problem of increased, perhaps double the numbers wanting a holiday thanks to the coming into effect at long last in peace time of the 1938 Act. The policies of the labour movement and people's expectations of a Labour Government made state intervention appealing to working people, many of whom actively campaigned for it. The next section will look at proposals, many of which were put forward by groups representing working-class interests, made for the provision of low priced holidays during that post-war period.

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169 Holidays - National Council for Social Service, op cit, p20

CHAPTER 7

PLANNING FOR WORKERS' DEMANDS AFTER THE HOLIDAYS WITH PAY ACT

7.1 Holidays and the State

Despite the passing of the Holidays with Pay Act, the outbreak of World War Two delayed its full implementation until after the arrival once more of peace. When the Act became law in July 1938, as was described in Chapter Five, wage regulating authorities were permitted to provide for holidays and paid leave and at the same time it enabled the Minister of Labour to assist voluntary schemes arrived at through collective agreements. After an interval to allow for the extension of paid holidays by negotiation, legislation was to have been passed in 1940 or 1941 making them compulsory throughout industry.[1] As discussed in the last chapter, existing accommodation could not meet the demand for cheaply priced vacations by the lower income groups, receiving paid holidays for the first time.

During the war years there was an unprecedented involvement by the government in economic and social life. The state regulated production and consumption through rationing. Employment was directed to meet the needs of wartime. There was state provision of services normally performed by women in the home, such as communal

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[1] Planning - A Broadsheet issued by PEP (Political and Economic Planning) no 194, October 13, 1942, pp2-3

canteens and nurseries to release women from some of the obligations of domestic labour, in order to make them available for work in wartime industry. Rationing, utility clothing, uniforms and the practical needs of work even dictated how people dressed. Requisitioning of property, the building of hostels, billeting of evacuees, military personnel and civilian workers affected traditional property rights and domestic arrangements. With most of the coastline out of bounds to civilians and families separated by military service, directed labour and evacuation, the normal routine of summer holidaymaking was obviously likely to be disrupted. At the same time the phenomena of evacuation, industrial transference and the innumerable postings of the Services, made the habit of travelling more widespread among people who rarely went away from home.[2]

Loss of the long fought for paid leave was not something the labour movement would accept quietly, and it seems the employers and Government realised how important breaks from work had become, both as a motivator and as a means of maintaining health and preventing absenteeism. The prospect of disruption or sacrifice of the holiday period had led Tynemouth District and Whitley Bay Trades' Council to discuss the matter at their meeting in April 1940.[3] A letter from its secretary, George Steele to the

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[2] Holidays - A Study made by the National Council of Social Service, Oxford, 1945, p68

[3] Letter from George Steele, Secretary, Tynemouth and District and Whitley Bay Trades' Council, to Sir Walter Citrine, General Secretary TUC, 4 April 1940, MSS 292/114/3, Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick

TUC described the:

> Apparent uneasiness and apprehension as to the possibility of interference either by the Government or employers to in some way nullify the advantages workers have derived from the many agreements in various industries. It was felt that the War Emergency may be used as an excuse for curtailing Holidays with Pay or perhaps postponing such holidays until after the War.[4]

Steele requested that the TUC General Council watch the matter carefully and asked that they take whatever steps were necessary to counteract any move in the direction feared by the members in Tynemouth District and Whitley Bay. The Secretary of the TUC's Research and Economic Department, George Woodcock, wrote in reply to Steele:

> I think you may rest assured that the fears expressed in your letter are not well founded, since there is much evidence that the Government and the employers are fully aware of the increasing need for holidays during the war period. As one piece of evidence, may I say that the representatives of the British Employers' Confederation upon the National Joint Advisory Council joined with the TUC representatives upon that body in advising the Government that it was more than ever necessary to maintain paid holidays during the war period.[5]

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[4] Ibid

[5] Letter from the Secretary, Research and Economic Department, TUC, 8 April 1940, MSS 292/114/3

Opinion polls and mass observation provided data for government and quasi-official reports into the morale of the population and emphasised the need for planning for social reconstruction once peace returned. The recent precedent of state involvement in almost all aspects of life, encouraged social researchers to anticipate that this involvement would continue in peace time. Officially commissioned reports into future use of natural resources, leisure needs and holidays all indicated that this would be imperative.

That the demand for holidays would double while only seventy-five per cent of pre-war accommodation would be available,[6] was feared by the Government and highlighted in official reports. Different interventionist policies were advocated to spread the demand through the season and to make available low priced accommodation to prevent overcrowding and overpricing during the August peak period of demand. If most of the population went away, and there was no more staggering of holiday dates than in 1937, it was calculated that the maximum number seeking accommodation at any one time would be in the region of five millions.[7] This was in comparison with a pre-war peak of around one and a quarter million. Planners estimated that this five million could be reduced to between two and four million or perhaps halved by spreading holidays between May and October.[8] Staggering could be assisted by cheaper rates being offered outside August which would

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[6] Planning, PEP, op cit, p4

[7] Planning, PEP, op cit, p5

[8] Ibid

help spread the load and also reduce peak prices by between ten and twenty per cent. In the first year of peace, 1946, a campaign for staggered holidays was conducted by the Ministry of Information to distribute the demand over a longer season. Another way of spreading the load was through diversifying the location of holiday venues. Country holidays could provide an alternative to the highly popular seaside for some people. The Ministry of Agriculture encouraged the young and active to take working holidays on farms to help with fruit, cereal and potato harvests. In the years immediately following the war agricultural camps attracted 200,000 city workers a year and the popularity of this kind of holiday remained throughout the 1950s.[9]

Early August remains the peak holiday period, in order to encourage a more even amount of visitors throughout the season, the tourist industry has introduced higher prices during this time to reflect the high market demand and to make other periods more attractive. Many workers though do not have a choice as to when they go away. As holidays with pay became a reality for the majority of workers during World War Two, the Government began to grow worried about the possible effects of millions of them converging on the resorts at the same time when the war ended. The Government therefore began to look at ways of encouraging staggering of different town's holidays[10] on similar lines to the Lancashire wakes where

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[9] Colin Ward and Dennis Hardy, Goodnight Campers!, London, 1986, p75

[10]Holidays - A Study made by the National Council for Social Service, Oxford University Press, 1945, pp4-7

communities celebrated during different weeks of the summer. The Great Western Railway was advocating June, with its long sunny days, as a desirable month for taking holidays in the 1930s.[11] This was to spread demand on train services over a longer period. Even earlier than this, in 1925, the Leicester Mercury editorial had raised the question of the need for staggering to avoid the crowds and congestion and hence the discomfort and stress suffered by travellers.[12]

Official publications during the Second World War, such as those of the Political and Economic Planning Unit and the report produced on Holiday Making and the Holiday Trades, discussed this issue and also concerns over the potential lack of accommodation.[13] The answer seemed to lie in government and municipal intervention and regulation of the tourist business, a process that had already started in the 1930s. Some local authorities had become involved in the provision of low priced accommodation in holiday camps[14] and at a national level, the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay was investigating the desirability of legislation to enforce the granting of paid holidays in most fields of employment. This resulted in 1938 in the Holidays with Pay Act. In the resorts themselves, local councils had

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[11] Great Western Railway Magazine, Vil XLIX, No 4, April 1937, p175 and Vol 50, No 4, April 1938, p147

[12]Leicester Mercury, 1 August 1925

[13] Elizabeth Brunner, "Holiday Making and the Holiday Trades", Nuffield College, Oxford University Press, 1945; "Planning for Holidays" - PLANNING - A Broadsheet issued by PEP (Political and Economic Planning), No 154, October 13, 1942

[14]Colin Ward and Dennis Hardy, "Goodnight Campers", op cit, p47-48

been involved in tourism provision from around the turn of the twentieth century, building amenities such as promenades, swimming pools, trams and street lighting as well as secondary investments like enlarged sewerage systems to cope with the increased population, to attract holidaymakers. These investments benefiting the whole town were financed communally by the town's high number of business ratepayers. To warrant this level of official concern, the numbers of potential tourists needed to be high enough to justify the expense and so local authorities needed to become involved in marketing their attractions and amenities to prospective visitors.

Again at national governmental level, the Scott Committee recommended the setting up of a central planning authority to control the use of land and to preserve amenities in rural areas. Ease of access to the countryside without disruption to agriculture would be promoted. A National Parks Authority would control areas of natural beauty, which would be classified as national recreation zones. In the expectation of a huge increase in demand for holiday accommodation, the Committee assumed that campsites would be provided in the National Parks. The Hobhouse Report on National Parks discussed holiday facilities and arrangements within them.[15] The Report of the Committee on Land Utilisation in Rural Areas recommended that the whole of the coastline be administered by the National Parks Authority, an idea that has still not been put into effect, despite threats to the shoreline in many places in England and Wales. The

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[15] Donald Chapman, Holidays and the State, Fabian Society Pamphlet, 1949, p16

Authority had no jurisdiction in Scotland.

Provided they would all come under the appropriate planning controls, the Committee was in favour of an increase in the number of Youth Hostels, campsites, commercial holiday camps and holiday villages. This was with reference to the provisions of the Camps Act of 1939 for the facilitation of the construction, maintenance and management of camps of a permanent character.[16] War began while the National Camps Corporation set up under the Act was still in its early days. After consultation with numerous departments, the location of camps on suitable sites relative to population centres was ensured.[17] These purpose built camps became used in an attempt to solve the problems of finding enough places to stay for those displaced through the exigencies of wartime. The Parliamentary Labour Party, on the Opposition benches, welcomed the camps as a step towards national planning which in peace-time could enable everyone, even the unemployed and low paid, to enjoy a holiday away from home.[18] The camps would make ideal family holiday accommodation when the war was over but in the meantime the National Camps Corporation was required to give priority to education authorities who would use them as school camps. This raised the prospect of a holiday in

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[16] Report of the Committee on Land Utilisation in Rural Areas, presented by the Minister of Works to Parliament, August 1942, paras 178-180

[17] Royal Commission on the Distribution of the Industrial Population - Report, January 1940

[18] Colin Ward and Dennis Hardy, Goodnight Campers!, op cit, p49

the country being available to every child for the first time.[19]

Soon after the War ended, the National Joint Advisory Council of the Ministry of Labour and National Service held discussions on the possibility of changing the date of the August Bank Holiday from the beginning to the end of the month, or possibly delaying it until early September. In a document marked "Strictly Confidential", it was reported within the TUC that:

> The Committee considered that a substantial reason why there is at present so very pronounced a peak holiday period at the end of July and the beginning of August is that, while there are many persons who would, in any case, be on holiday at this favourite period of the summer, there are also many others whose holiday dates are affected by the consideration that a week's holiday at that time, plus the Bank Holiday week-end, means, in effect, a ten-day break. It was felt that if the first Monday in August ceased to be a Bank Holiday and a similar incentive were provided earlier and later in the holiday season, a substantial contribution would be made to staggering.[20]

The question of spreading the demand for holidays throughout the summer season was also addressed by the Government through the Ministry of Labour and National

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[19] Ward and Hardy, ibid, p51

[20] Ministry of Labour and National Service, National Joint Advisory Council, Staggering of Holidays, Dates of Bank Holidays, NJC 47, 18 January 1949

Service, which set up a body to look into the matter. The resulting Standing Committee on the Staggering of Holidays in England and Wales had agreed at its meeting on 20 October 1948, that immediate consideration should be given to two proposals. The first one was to substitute for Whit Monday a fixed Bank Holiday on the second Monday in June. The second was to substitute for the August Bank Holiday a Bank Holiday on the first Monday in September.[21] Regarding the first proposal, the Committee were of the opinion that, if August Bank Holiday were postponed to September, the Bank Holiday immediately preceding it should not be earlier than mid-June to avoid an excessively long gap between the two Bank Holidays which were of most interest from the point of view of those wishing to go away for holidays. Such a date was likely to be more attractive than the variable Whit Monday to people who were prepared to consider taking their annual holiday earlier in the year than in the past, but who wished to combine their annual holiday with a Bank Holiday because of the extra days they could then take at a single stretch. If there were a fixed holiday in mid-June it would have been likely that it could inaugurate the holiday season. This would have encouraged taking holidays earlier in the season, it was argued. The Committee also had no hesitation in accepting that the August Bank Holiday should be postponed to a later date. If a day was fixed on the last Monday in August, it was feared that would lead to a new peak period at the end rather than the beginning of the month. If it were delayed until the second Monday in September, it might not have been attractive enough to potential holidaymakers owing to the shorter evenings and

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[21] Ibid

colder weather. The Committee concluded that the first Monday in September would be the most suitable date for the revised Bank Holiday.[22] These proposals were submitted to the TUC and the British Employers' Confederation for discussion before any legislative change was promoted. The eventual outcome was a change in the timing of both Bank Holidays, although not exactly to the dates recommended by the Committee.

7.2 Accommodation and the War-time Government

The Government's interest in camps, which resulted in the formation of the corporation came about because of the Ministry of Health's concern over evacuating four million women and children from vulnerable cities to home billets. By mid-1940 out of a planned fifty camps, 31 camps with dormitories, classrooms, kitchens, dining and assembly halls and accommodation for staff had been built in England and Wales with a further five in Scotland. The camps in England and Wales, administered by the National Camps Association, were let to local education authorities and used by secondary or post-secondary schools, many of which were escaping from city bombing. This use of camps by secondary pupils caused political accusations of elitism when accommodation was reserved for secondary pupils at a time when the poorer sections of the working class could not afford to keep their children on at school. For this reason the Scottish camps, under the auspices of the Scottish Special Housing Association, were used by elementary pupils, hard to

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[22] Ibid

billet elsewhere.[23]

Camps were not just used by evacuees: internees, military personnel and relocated workers all needed to be housed. Building and running camps and catering for large numbers of people were not tasks in which the Government had a lot of experience and so some of the holiday camp entrepreneurs were enlisted to advise and oversee proceedings. Almost all the existing holiday camps were requisitioned; many of them for use by the armed services. Not enough places were provided, though, to satisfy the need to accommodate those displaced as part of the war effort or for reasons of civil defence.

The Government did a deal with the most flamboyant of all the holiday camp entrepreneurs. Billy Butlin was in the process of building a new camp at Filey when the war began. Butlin refused to believe the rumours that were circulating about war being imminent, although the Tannoy systems at Clacton and Skegness were continually interrupting entertainment broadcasts to give names of men who had to report back to their home town for call-up.[24] Reservists, school teachers and air raid wardens were all told to cancel their holidays. The war minister Hore Belisha negotiated with Butlin to complete the Filey camp for use by the RAF at a price of £175 per occupant, considerably cheaper than the army's own cost of £250 per

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[23] Ward and Hardy, Goodnight Campers!, op cit, p73

[24] Sue Read, Hello Campers, London, 1986, p37

person.[25] Where Butlin did well out of the deal was in his stipulation that he would have the right to buy back the camp at the end of the war. This would mean that the canny Butlin would have a new ready-made camp just when there was a huge demand for holidays after the war. He had even devised a sunken parade ground that could later be used as a boating lake. The Government had also made a good deal for themselves as after the previous war it had cost more to dismantle the camps and restore the land than it had cost to build them.[26] Butlin developed two further camps with the same buy-back agreements as at Filey. HMS Glendower was built at Pwllheli in North Wales and another camp, HMS Scotia, was built near Ayr in Scotland.

Butlin had another war-time role, raising the morale of inhabitants of existing government camps. The Minister of Supply asked him to report on the reasons for low morale in hostels for female ordnance factory workers. He recommended exchanging their internment camp atmosphere for a bit of a holiday atmosphere when the women weren't working. He encouraged dancing, whist drives, amateur theatricals, variety shows and bright paint; all features of his holiday camps. Butlin was then asked, in 1943, to assist towns to organise holiday weeks to encourage people to take "holidays at home".[27] This was an important acknowledgement by the Government that even in wartime, workers needed holidays. Butlin purchased the main

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[25] Ward and Hardy, op cit, p70

[26] Ibid

[27] Ibid, p72

travelling fairs which then toured from town to town during their respective holiday weeks. His next venture was to organise leave centres for the services in Belgium. The arrival of peace found Butlin in a powerful position to take advantage of the massive market for holidays after the war had ended.[28]

7.3 Planning for Peace

As part of the planning process for future holiday accommodation, a working group made a proposal for a national holiday centre corporation. It was hoped that this would be able to meet some of the problems of post-war demand through the conversion of some of the Government's war-time sites such as industrial and Royal Ordnance Hostels and services' camps. A semi-public body, similar in form to the National Camps Corporation and National Service Hostels Corporation, was suggested to manage these centres; a National Holiday Centre Corporation which would be responsible for maintaining good standards of holiday provision at minimum prices. An obvious difficulty envisaged in the state provision of holiday hostels was the fear that those who might use them would feel "pauperised", at a disadvantage to their neighbours who went to boarding houses or commercial camps for their holidays.[29] For the Government to assume direct control of holidays in a thoroughly planned Britain was a rather premature thought, according to the National Council for Social Service. It was not even clear which Ministry ought to be responsible for holidays

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[28] Ibid

[29] Holidays - National Council for Social Service, op cit, p54

as aspects affecting them fell within the remit of various ministries, such as Labour, Health, Education, Supply, Works and Building and Town and Country Planning. The Government agency responsible for holiday matters at the time was the Catering Wages Commission. This Commission, which was set up under the Catering Act, had the primary function of rehabilitating the catering industry but also had the duty of planning for post-war holidays in general. It was officially responsible to the Government through the Minister of Labour and National Service.

The Post-war Holidays Group was a working party instigated by the Catering Wages Commission. It comprised members from groups representing workers and their needs in the area of leisure and health, such as the Co-operative Holidays Association, the Holiday Fellowship, the Industrial Welfare Society, the Workers' Travel Association, the Youth Hostels Association and the Miners' Welfare Association as well as the YMCA, the Camping Club of Great Britain and the Royal Institute of British Architects.[30] In its report back to the Catering Wages Commission, the group recommended the formation of an ad hoc body rather than direct governmental responsibility and control. This body would "hold and manage government hostel accommodation, grant financial aid to local authorities and voluntary organisations to help with the capital cost of new holiday provision which lack of funds prevented them from doing at the rate

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[30] Report of the Post-war Holidays Group to the Catering Wages Commission, September 1944

required".[31] This proposed central authority would include representatives from the voluntary sector and its administrators would have Civil Service status. The authority was to have responsibility for the conversion, at government expense, of existing government hostels selected as suitable for holidays. The hostels would then be leased during the summer holiday months to local authorities and voluntary organisations. The charges for accommodation would be fixed (at thirty shillings for example) and voluntary organisations would act as managing agents on a "no-profit-no-loss" basis, as the Royal Ordnance Factory hostels had been during the war. Alternatively the hostels could be rented at nominal rents to cover normal depreciation of property and be free of capital costs, the tenants to make their own arrangements regarding charges. Outside the holiday season the premises could be put to other uses such as for conference centres, rallies, adult education or rest homes.[32]

It was not envisaged that the new central authority should necessarily be a permanent body. If its hostels and camps were successful, then the authority could continue indefinitely. If public support declined after the first few seasons, then it should be seen only as a temporary expedient. These ideas did not come to fruition as the Ministry of Works retained many of the best places for other government departments or demanded

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[31] Ibid

[32] Report of the Post-war Holidays Group to the Catering Wages Commission, September 1944, paras 133-141

commercial prices for them. In most places the premises were too costly to adapt.[33]

Another report by the British Tourist and Holidays Board looked at the demand for accommodation to assist the preparation of development plans under the Town and Country Planning Act. In 1948, the Board concluded that "most people were much better off and better educated than in the past".[34] They therefore expected a higher standard of holiday provision than previously. They would not be satisfied with crowded accommodation, indifferent service and gloomy conditions. This was identified as the reason for the slackening of demand for low-grade apartments and boarding houses. The demand for holiday camps was increasing and most camps were practically booked to capacity over a year in advance, it was noted.[35]

Bringing requisitioned accommodation and camps into public use as quickly as possible was vital. By the autumn of 1946 over a thousand camps in England and Wales had been squatted by nearly forty thousand homeless families.[36] On some sites chalets were occupied by people bombed-out of nearby towns, many of whom were not re-housed by local authorities until the 1960s.[37] The huts

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[33] Chapman, op cit, p17

[34] Chapman, op cit, pp6-7

[35] Ward and Hardy, op cit, pp75-76; Chapman, op cit, p7

[36] Ward and Hardy, op cit, p79

[37] Ward and Hardy, op cit, p72

and chalets around the coast were now squatted as a necessity, not to achieve a holiday home for leisure use.

The Government was anxious to dispose of its camps, which were now a liability and welcomed their sale back to the former site owners as this avoided demolition costs. The site owners were now holiday camp proprietors who had to continue the war-time ethic of "make do and mend" while preparing their camps to receive guests. Building materials were strictly rationed but there were plenty of army surplus beds, tables, chairs, blankets and catering equipment to be acquired cheaply at auction. As capital became available many were completely redeveloped and a lot of them are still in use today. Pontins was one of the commercial firms that established themselves by offering cut-price holidays in patched up military bases and pre-war camps from 1946 onwards.[38]

The post-war years saw the pioneer camps of voluntary associations such as the co-operative movement and trade unions, as well as smaller private operators starved of the necessary funds for improvements to bring their camps up to the standards now expected by working people. This led to some, like the Civil Service Camp at Corton, being bought out by new commercial chains such as Harry Warner's, Holimarine and Hoseasons.[39] As a consequence of the need for major capital investment to provide the type of facilities demanded by the rising expectations of the

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[38] Ward and Hardy, op cit, p80

[39] Ibid

working class, the era of the socialist, co-operative and trade union camps came to an end. This was not because they were unpopular but due to a paucity of financial resources at a critical time when both expansion and refurbishment were required. Nevertheless, these early, unashamedly ideological providers of cheap holidays to working-class activists and trade unionists had demonstrated that there was a demand for this type of accommodation.[40] Their pioneering example was followed by commercial camp proprietors, who have continued and developed the holiday camp style of vacation up to the present day.

The TUC continued its campaign for paid leave for all workers when it established a Committee on the Forty-four Hour Week and Holidays With Pay in 1946.[41] This group co-ordinated the campaign for reduced working hours and the extension of the 1938 Act to all employees, either through legislation or agreement through collective bargaining.

Wartime state regulation set a precedent for the reformist policies of the post-war Labour government. Nationalisation by that government of many essential services was the fulfilment of years of campaigning within the labour movement. All the nationalised industries and services were essential to economic

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[40] Chapman, op cit, pp9-10; "Planning for Holidays", PEP, op cit, p8

[41] TUC Policy Document, 1946, MSS 292 114/3, Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick

recovery and reconstruction. It is surprising therefore that one of the services taken into public ownership was the travel operation of the two agencies, Thomas Cook and Son and Dean and Dawson. A holiday camp venture by Cooks in partnership with the London Midland and Southern Railway Company at Prestatyn, that offered a complete holiday package for two thousand guests at a time, had been opened in 1938. This was in order to take advantage of the additional eight million expected to be entitled to a holiday with pay following the Act but the war years were tough on the travel companies. Cook's share capital in 1942 was vested in Hay's Wharf Cartage Company Limited, a subsidiary of the four mainline railway companies which paid off some of the travel agency's losses that amounted to around £500,000 by 1945. After the war Cook's remained a part of the rail companies. It was kept busy repatriating refugees who were given travel vouchers by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Agency that could only be exchanged at Cook's offices. Dean and Dawson another great Victorian and pre-war travel agency with thirty-one branches had been taken over by the London North Eastern Railway. Following an initial boom in demand for holidays in 1946, which took place despite currency restrictions, a ban on foreign holidays followed in 1947 lasting for about a year.[42] This was an attempt to remedy an acute shortage of exchange. On 1st January 1948 the Labour government nationalised the railways and as subsidiaries Thomas Cook and Dean and Dawson were nationalised along with them.[43]

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[42] Piers Brendon, Thomas Cook - 150 Years of Popular Travel, London, 1996, pp281-282

[43] Ibid

7.4 Holidays and Post-war Social Reforms

Government involvement in policies affecting tourism had become an established fact. The post-war Labour government established the British Tourist and Holidays Board, with its executive functions carried out by four divisions: tourist; home holidays; hotels and catering. The Home Holidays Committee, which included representatives of the industry and "consumers", was created at the Board's first meeting in 1947. Its duties were based on the 1945 report of the Catering Wages Commission and included the following:

a) To compile an authoritative and comprehensive list of all holiday establishments

b) To provide suitable guide books, etc

c) To carry out a survey of holiday accommodation

d) To co-operate with the authority responsible for National Parks and the interests concerned in the country's holiday services

e) To co-operate on the provision of new types of holiday facilities

f) To co-operate in any measures designed to effect the staggering of holidays

g) To pay particular attention to the holiday accommodation of low-income groupings.[44]

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[44] Chapman, op cit, p18

Unfortunately the Committee had no power and no funds so its work was mainly confined to surveys of the existing holiday provision and building up knowledge to produce a holidays policy.

> It is significant that one of the original functions, which was later dropped was "to pay particular attention to the holiday accommodation of lower-income groups". Without money and responsibility it would, of course, have been unable to do much in this respect. But it is clear that, when its experience is read in conjunction with the history of findings and discussions of the last twelve years, the Committee's work provides an indispensable basis on which a plan for cheap holidays can be built.[45]

The government did not allow the Tourist Board to hold any properties of its own to lease out, nor even to have first call on large houses and estates handed over under death duty taxation. The Home Holidays Committee did, however, supervise the Olympic Games of 1947 and so did have a little experience in the area of managing accommodation.[46]

Policies to help extend holidays to poorer social groups were not entirely abandoned by the Labour Party during its term of office. The previously abandoned principle of the British Tourist and Holidays Board, "to pay

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[45] Chapman, op cit, p18

[46] Chapman, op cit, p17

particular attention to holiday accommodation for lower-income groups", being resurrected in Party policy. "More Family Holidays" was the heading of a section of the Labour Party's draft election programme for 1950, issued by its National Executive Committee.[47]

The policy statement proposed that there should be a Holidays Council, set up with government support, to begin providing centres where families could have reasonably priced holidays. These centres would be leased to non-profit seeking holiday organisations, relieving them of excessive capital costs. Some of the stately homes that were envisaged coming into government ownership in lieu of death duties could have become some of the first properties used for this purpose.

A series of pamphlets with the theme "The Challenge of 1950" was published by the Fabian Society as an aid to debate and discussion within the labour movement. One of these pamphlets was entitled "Holidays and the State" and gave a full-length description of the issues behind the statement "More Family Holidays" from the draft election programme.

> The development of social services during Labour's first five years has inevitably and rightly been confined mainly to such basic needs as social security, education and health services - measures to protect against misfortune and to secure for everyone a higher minimum standard in the basic

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[47] Chapman, op cit, p3

needs of life.[48]

Even so, funds had been found to foster the Arts and other creative recreations.[49] If Labour were re-elected, it was recognised that any further advance in social services would have to be limited because of the lack of resources. Priority would have to be given to the consolidation of the measures of the previous term of office. Holiday provision was practically the only new service proposed.

The policy would have been to co-ordinate and to have made more widely available the benefit of a holiday by supporting voluntary agencies in extending their facilities in order to provide more accommodation affordable to the lower paid.

> Labour policy has often been for the State to intervene in order to co-ordinate and then make more widely available benefits which have been developing piecemeal or through voluntary agencies - to build on or to extend facilities which, up to now, have not reached most working homes.[50]

Holidays, though, were beyond the limit of what it was thought ought to be provided free by the state.

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[48] Ibid

[49] Ibid

[50] Chapman, op cit, p4

> … The limit of what can be state-provided is in sight for the time being; moreover, the limit of what should come free from the state - the limit, if you like, of what should be taken away from some reliance on personal initiative - is also in some cases in sight. Holiday provision is probably well outside that limit.[51]

The Labour Party recognised the impossibility and undesirability of free facilities that would be interpreted by some members of the electorate as "bribes for all".[52] As a form of recreation so influenced by personal taste and so easily ruined by regimentation, any schemes for state holiday camps and the like would have been unpalatable.[53] Proposals in the discussion pamphlet, issued by the Fabian Society, suggested using the voluntary sector, for instance the Co-operative Holidays Association, the Holiday Fellowship and the Workers' Travel Association, as managing agents in joint holiday initiatives.

The Labour Party was not re-elected and so its proposed schemes never materialised. Holidays though became more widely available to lower income groups throughout the 1950s, not because of state intervention but because of rising real incomes across society generally, secured through the consistent campaigning on wages issues by the

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[51] Ibid

[52] Ibid

[53] Ibid

trade union movement.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

8.1 Comparisons with Other European Countries at the Time of the Holidays with Pay Act

By the late twentieth century free time had become as much a feature of advanced capitalist society as work. As a component of the reward for labour, leisure is now as vital as salaries and wages. Paid time off and limitations on hours of work are part of the conditions of service in all but casual employment. Following a directive from the European Union, new Working Time Regulations came into force in the United Kingdom on 1 October 1998. These regulations provide for workers who have been employed continuously for thirteen weeks the right to three weeks' paid holiday in each leave year, rising to four weeks after 23 November 1999.[1] The United Kingdom's government initially challenged the legal basis of this Directive, missing the European Union's deadline of 23 November 1996 for its implementation. The UK's objection was on the grounds that the Directive should not have been put forward as it had been, as a health and safety measure subject only to qualified majority voting, arguing that it should have required unanimous approval by European Union member states. This would have allowed the British government to exercise its veto to block approval, putting Britain behind other European nations in regard to legally upheld rights to paid holidays and limitations on working hours.[2]

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[1] Croner European Briefing, Issue No 79, 10 August 1998, p3

[2] Croner European Briefing, Issue No 59, 10 December 1996, p1

Trade Unions in Britain supported the EU Directive against their own government.[3]

This reluctance by British governments to enforce a minimum paid holiday for workers on industry was not new, as was demonstrated by the compromising attitude of the provisions of the 1938 Act, in the face of trade union campaigning. It was not new, either, for Britain to be behind other European nations regarding paid holidays. At the time of the passing into law of the Holidays with Pay Act in 1938, in terms of legislation, Britain was behind other western European countries regarding holidays with pay even though ironically English workers had stronger traditions of holidaymaking. Since 1924, 82 per cent of German workers had obtained holidays with pay, a figure that increased to 98 per cent in 1929 when at that time only thirteen per cent of English and merely one per cent of French workers received the same benefit.[4] Although this thesis has dealt mainly with the case of English workers (only occasionally referring to other areas of the United Kingdom when looking at examples), labour movement involvement in leisure and holidays was not exclusive to Britain.

In France, the Popular Front government introduced the Congés Payés in 1936, but most French workers had no tradition of going away nor could they afford to. Many first generation French proletarians used the opportunity to reaffirm their rural roots and family ties.[5] According to André Rauch, for most French workers the Congés Payés

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[3] NATFHE Branch Circular, Pol/F/24/98, 9 December 1998

[4] J-C Richez and Léon Strauss, Un Temps Nouveau pour les Ouvriers: les Congés Payés (1930-1960), Alain Corbin, L'Avenement des Loisirs (1850-1950), Aubier, Paris, 1995, pp376-412, p380

[5] André Rauch, Les Vacances en France - de 1830 à nos jours, Hachette, Paris, France 1996, p103

was simply time off work and not a holiday. Some took on other jobs, worked around the house or went back to their birthplace to work on the family farm. In Zeldin's history of France between 1848 and 1945, he writes "the workers began going on holiday to the country, some had houses in their place of origin".[6]

> Steele, an English mechanic who spent twenty-three years in France, wrote in 1904 that French workers tended to enjoy themselves as far as possible without paying, unlike the English workers who spent vast sums on their Bank Holidays.[7]

This did not begin to change until 1936. The scope of the legislation too, was far reaching compared to that which followed in Britain. The annual holiday was fixed at a continuous period of not less than one week of six working days, for workers with six months continuous service. Those who had completed twelve months' service received a minimum period of fifteen continuous days annual holiday including twelve working days.[8]

When the Congés Payés were introduced, it came as a surprise to most workers. Holidays with pay had not been part of the Popular Front's electoral manifesto, although in 1925 the French TUC (CGT) had unanimously passed a resolution demanding legislation guaranteeing workers a holiday of twelve days.[9] A list of demands formulated in the Renault factories in April 1935 made no mention of paid holidays until the eleventh line and the French

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[6] Theodore Zeldin, France 1848-1945, Oxford, 1973, p19

[7] Zeldin, op cit, p273

[8] Minutes of Evidence of the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, London, 1937, p 2, para 12

[9] The International Trade Union Movement, Vol IX, July/Aug 1929, No7/8, p137

communists did not regard holidays as a matter of urgency.[10] This was unlike the British Communist Party, which had placed reductions in hours of work and the introduction of paid holidays in the first two agenda items of its manifesto in 1929.[11] A Parisian newspaper produced in the summer of 1936[12] carried just one small private advertisement for holiday accommodation near Dinard for only twenty-five francs a day for full board, including drinks. A copy of the Leicester Mercury for the equivalent date carried 76 advertisements for such lodgings. Railway companies publicised excursions to Savoy, Anvers, Versailles and the beaches at Boran and Meaux-Trilport with entrance to the beach included. Camping in railway carriages was also promoted for groups of ten people or more. British railway companies offered a similar initiative where old passenger carriages were refitted like caravans, towed with the holidaymakers on board to a quiet siding near the coast or in the country and left there for a week or two.

When writing his Transitional Programme for the Fourth International, Leon Trotsky denounced the conciliatory politics of the Popular Front, which according to him, under the banner of the October Revolution, would doom the French working class to impotence and clear the road to fascism.[13] Trotsky described Blum's social legislation as an act of social betrayal. As an originator of the theory of the United Front, Trotsky was not a sectarian, neither, as argued in the discussion in Chapter One, would he have been against holidays with pay. In this

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[10] Rauch, op cit, p98

[11] Class Against Class, The General Election Programme of Communist Party of Great Britain, London, 1929, pp22-23

[12] L'Echo de Paris, 27 August 1936

[13] Leon Trotsky, Transitional Programme, April 1938, London, 1979, p9

instance, though, he believed, they had been granted as a means of buying off and averting potentially escalating militancy. In France, tourism and leisure were things outside the sphere of political intervention, when holidays with pay were granted in June 1936 "no-one could believe that one was going to be paid to do nothing".[14] For most French workers it seems holidays with pay was something they had never thought about. They did not know what to do with their free time.[15] Only 560,000 newly introduced special train tickets were sold for Congés Payés in 1936 but by the end of the 1930s about 1.5 million were taking holidays.[16] The union organisation, the Conféderation Générale de Travail (CGT), put on excursions for factory workers in 1936, helping to demonstrate the idea of what a holiday ought to be. The new holidaymakers and excursionists created an atmosphere like that of a country wedding. "They cried with joy, sang and talked of simple things - 'Vive la vie!'".[17] By contrast in 1930's England, the holiday habit was already established through most industrial regions even though workers sacrificed pay to achieve it and had to save hard throughout the rest of the year. In the French case, historians argue that the Congés Payés have been symbolically the most important achievement of the Popular Front.[18]

Germany also had paid holidays before Britain. Like in England, leisure in the earlier period of industrialised society, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, was often initiated and organised through the

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[14] Trempe R, Bocus A, "Les premiers congés payé à Decazeville et à Mazamet", le Mouvement Social, janv-mars 1990, no 150, p67, quoted by Rauch p99

[15] J-C Richez and Léon Strauss, op cit, p398

[16] Rauch, op cit, p100

[17] Richez and Strauss, op cit, p400

[18] Corbain, op cit, p377

labour movement. In pre-World War One Germany, the Social Democratic Party had developed a vast network of recreational clubs and associations such as choral, gymnastics and cycling groups, similar to the British Clarion Club movement but on a vaster scale with many more members. The German clubs were very politicised and, during the repression and suppression of worker's political organisation of the Bismarck years, provided the means by which otherwise illicit socialist networks could be built. Every locality with an active labour movement could count on annual festivals during the summer months by the 1890s. Almost every type of organisation within the labour movement held its own festival. These festivals were leisure opportunities for the whole family, not just the men who were the normal participants in the associational life of the clubs. They gave a public presentation of the alternative culture in symbolic and recreational form.[19] These festivals were an integral part of the labour movement milieu, high points in the calendar of sponsoring organisations.

In fascist Italy and Germany, movements to promote holidays and leisure amongst workers, such as the Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro and Kraft durch Freude organisations, also flourished. These organisations like some set up in France, such as the Federation sportive et gymnique du travail and the Centres Laïque, in response to the 1936 legislation, not only promoted the idea of holidays and outdoor leisure activities but provided facilities to enable large numbers of people who had previously been denied the chance, the opportunity to take part.

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[19] Vernon L Lidtke, The Alternative Culture - Socialist Labor in Imperial Germany, London, 1985, p76

In the fascist states, the total defeat of the working class and its political organisations led to the demise of its independent cultural and leisure formations. Fascist ideology claimed that only within the family could workers find the most satisfactory form of recreation. This required a free weekend and family-oriented holiday camps instead of tours by male workmates and clubs, which did not contribute to family life. Kraft durch Freude tolerated no social contradictions and obscured the real differences between social groups with its celebration of unity, claimed the German exile, A Sternheim. He argued that capitalism had taken away the family's social functions allowing it to survive only in the "free choice of the uses of leisure".[20] For young people, youth movements provided recreation and summer camps, for girls of the Bund Deutscher Mädel (League for German Maidens), as well as boys in the Hitlerjugend (Hitler Youth). Physical fitness was imperative to the future of the German race and nation. A girl's body no longer remained in the private sphere but was subordinated to the national interest. Fit girls would develop into fit women, bear healthy children and therefore preserve the future health of the nation.[21] In fascist states, directed use of leisure, recreation and holidays was important not for the improved health it might give to individuals but because of its importance in racial-biological ideology.[22]

Six days' holiday with pay after one year's service had reached fourteen million German workers by 1936.[23] In

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[20] Gary Cross, Time and Money - The Making of Consumer Culture, London and New York, 1993, p107

[21] Lisa Pine, "Girls in Uniform", History Today, Volume 49, Number 3, March 1999, pp24-29, p25

[22] Ibid, p26

[23] Minutes of Evidence of the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, London, 1937, p24, para 36

Italy a Royal Decree of 1928 made it obligatory for collective agreements to include arrangements for paid leave of at least a week for those with one year's continuous employment, which rose to ten days for those with ten years' service. Even so, Sternheim argued that totalitarian control of leisure destroyed even this last vestige of the family in "private interest and pleasure".[24]

In pre-Second World War Belgium, the government had established a state scheme to assist workers' holidays. An Act was passed in July 1936 providing for the grant of holidays with pay. Prior to this it had been unusual for manual workers in private industry to receive paid leave. The Act applied to a wide range of industries, including mining, quarrying, manufacturing industry, building, public works, civil engineering, gas, water and electricity services, ship building and repair, transport, docks and warehouses, health, entertainment, catering and commercial and clerical work.[25] The duration of the annual holiday was not so generous as in France, only six days for those with a year's continuous service. All those below a certain income were entitled to claim a fifty per cent reduction on rail fares and at hotels, which chose to take part in the scheme. The government made up the other half of the costs. This scheme only lasted for a short time as hotels pulled out because the better-off guests were shunning those taking in subsided working-class visitors.[26]

Workers in the Irish Free State also gained the right to holidays with pay in 1936. The system applied to all

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[24] Gary Cross, op cit, p106

[25] Minutes of Evidence of the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, pp4-5, para 18-20

[26] Holidays, National Council of Social Service,(NCSS), p79

wage and salary earners employed in industrial work; it did not cover persons engaged in agricultural, commercial, clerical or domestic work. As in Belgium, those entitled to paid leave through the legislation, were allowed not less than six consecutive days of annual leave for every complete year in which they had been in continuous employment.[27]

In Norway non-profit making holiday provision was pioneered by trade unions, similarly to in England. In 1899 the Oslo typographers had their own holiday centre in the mountains. After 1918 many other unions opened holiday homes offering low priced accommodation to their members. The Labour Protection Act of 1936, which came into force at the start of the following year, granted 500,000 work people a minimum of nine days' annual holiday with pay after one years' continuous service. Collective agreements already covered most workers, giving holiday entitlement of either one or two weeks.[28] By the end of 1937, all workers in Norway were in receipt of at least a fortnight's holiday with pay due to renegotiated collective agreements. The Norwegian government set up the State Holiday Council in 1939. In Norway the rationale for holidays was strongly related to a health perspective.[29]

After a successful campaign in the 1930s for Norwegian workers' holidays and the establishment of a State Board of Recreation, attention turned to the needs of women. The need for holidays for busy Norwegian housewives was emphasised and a separate fund set up to provide them.

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[27] Minutes of Evidence of the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, pp6-7, para 29-30

[28] Minutes of Evidence of the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, p24, para 28

[29] Holidays, NCSS, p81

The reason for this was that the kind of holiday accommodation usually affordable to poor families meant that the mother was involved in more work on holiday, not less. This justified the need for separate subsidised holidays for these women.[30]

Under an Act of 1931, workers in Sweden became entitled to an annual holiday of at least four working days during the summer half-year. Holidays with pay had also been granted under collective agreements in most branches of industry. In 1933 it was estimated that eighty per cent of all Swedish industrial workers and ninety per cent of salaried employees came under such provision.[31]

The right to holidays with pay in the USSR was based on the Labour Code of 1922 and the Regulations issued by the USSR People's Commissariat of Labour for the administration of the provisions of the Code, dated April 1930.[32] The legislation covered everyone employed for remuneration. After five and a half months continuous employment in the same establishment, adult workers became entitled to twelve days' leave. Those working in dangerous or unhealthy industries could have extra time off. Cash compensation could be received for those who did not take the holidays.[33]

8.2 Women and Holidays

The participation of women in holidaymaking has not been

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[30] Ibid, p82

[31] Minutes of Evidence of the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, London, 1937, p24, para 30

[32] Minutes of Evidence of the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, London, 1937, p24

[33] Ibid

dealt with separately in this work because of the paucity of specific references. Wherever data and sources specifically identify women, this has been included in the text. Unfortunately women are rarely mentioned and no separate statistics quantifying their involvement are available. On early excursion trains, women passengers were charged half-price fares and so it is not possible using railway statistics to differentiate between numbers of women and children travelling.[34] In descriptions of accommodation for visitors to the Great Exhibition, the records relating to cheaper lodgings all described the premises as being suitable for working men or mechanics. The rules for registration with the Central Accommodation Agency specified that lodgings must be single sex unless specifically for married couples or families. Places offering to put up single women had to be supervised by a woman who was married herself.[35] Wherever anywhere was deemed to be suitable for women, respectability also was particularly emphasised. Only at one meeting of local workers to discuss arrangements for the Exhibition are women mentioned as being present in the crowd, when it was reported that a large number of both sexes enrolled in the travel club at Southampton.[36] The feeling was expressed at a public meeting in Leicester, that it was to be hoped an equal number of the "fair sex" would avail themselves of the opportunity to take part in the visits to London.[37] At the same meeting another speaker hoped that both working men and women would participate in the

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[34] Table of Railway excursion fares given by Morris Brooke Smith, "The Growth and Development of Popular Entertainment and Pastimes in Lancashire Cotton Towns, 1830-1870", M.Litt Dissertation, University of Lancaster, 1970, p135. From Excursion Handbills, 1849, Preston Records Office.

[35] Circular of the London Central Registry, London, 1851, Manchester Records Office

[36] Journal of Design and Manufacture, London, 1851, p156

[37] Leicestershire Mercury, 10 August 1850

event. There is no reason to assume that Southampton and Leicester were exceptional and so it is assumed that where crowds or groups are mentioned they comprised both males and females.

As the north western textile producing areas of England led the way in pioneering the week away at the seaside, the family groups going off on their holidays would certainly have included female family members. In the mills women were employed in large numbers and it was their wages contributing to household incomes which made holidays possible. Holiday Savings Clubs proliferated in textile producing areas due to the opportunities for women's employment, which created relatively high family incomes. From the statistics from Brunner-Mond, it can be seen that there were 935 women members of the savings club there in 1908, compared with 1,135 men.[38]

Even where women are not explicitly mentioned, their contribution to the holiday should not be forgotten or underestimated. Even on holiday women continued to mind children and, when full-board was not available, shop for food in the apartments system or cook as well if it was a self-catering arrangement. Even at the Caister Socialist Camp, from 1906 up until the 1930s, where tasks were performed communally, the cooking was done by women although men did other work, usually gender defined such as gardening, as their contribution.[39]

The role of women, especially wives and mothers, as carers and homemakers in the domestic sphere continued even on holiday. On excursions and often during the holiday women would have had to make sandwiches and

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[38] G C Martin, Working-class Holiday Making Down to 1947, MA Thesis, University of Leicester, 1968, p46

[39] Colin Ward and Dennis Hardy, Goodnight Campers, London, 1986, p16

prepare refreshments for the journey or picnics. Just getting oneself and children to the station in time to catch a train involved time management skills. Shopping for or sewing new holiday clothes for the family, doing all the extra washing, ironing and mending so that the family could appear well dressed and respectable were all women's tasks. Even general thrift in housekeeping all year round to allow savings to be made, depended on the skills of women homemakers. If the family stayed at home for holidays, the tradition of entertaining within the home would entail a lot of extra work preparing for hospitality. Just to try and make things seem a bit special would depend on women's labour. Even not doing anything special at all would involve more work as men and children would have been at home all day necessitating more cleaning and cooking with the family under her feet. Advocates of the creation of holiday centres by the Government, all emphasised the urgent need for childcare to give mothers the chance of a rest.[40]

The holiday was a very different experience for working-class women compared with those of the middle-class. The middle-class household included not just the nuclear family but servants, including a nanny, as well. This would have ensured that the parents actually had an opportunity to enjoy a break together, free from the responsibilities of childcare.[41] These nannies, though, were working-class women themselves. This could have influenced some working-class families as once a young woman married and left service, she would have acquired a set of expectations about what a holiday ought to involve, even if it was a new experience for them.

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[40] Report of the Post-war Holidays Group to the Catering Wages Commission, September 1944; Holidays - A Study Made by the National Council of Social Service, Oxford University Press, 1945, pp19-25

[41] James Walvin, Beside the Seaside, London, 1978, p95

Statistics counting the numbers receiving holidays with pay refer to insured workers who, before most women paid full national insurance contributions, would have included mostly men, as would figures showing those covered by collective agreements. Where women were most commonly employed was in jobs that were not highly unionised, apart from in textile related trades. These were among the last to receive paid holidays.

Planning recommendations made in the 1940s while waiting for the Holidays with Pay Act to come into force, expressly called for the kind of holiday accommodation that would guarantee relaxation for mothers. Holiday camps with canteens, entertainment and childcare were recommended as the best solution for women with children who could then also enjoy a break from routine.[42] The National Council for Social Service had provided holidays on a small scale for mothers only, leaving children at home with their fathers.[43]

8.3 Summary of Working-class Holidaymaking up to 1950

The inability to afford a holiday away from home has come to be regarded as one of the indicators of relative poverty in modern Britain. Better or more secure incomes, as well as improved conditions and shorter working hours mean that workers are less physically tired which in turn has helped to facilitate leisure travel and tourism. The increased regimentation, decreased autonomy, intensified production and, in some cases, de-

[42] Holidays - A Study Made by the National Council of Social Service, Oxford University Press, 1945, pp19-25

[43] Holidays, op cit, p23

skilling and loss of productive control in twentieth century industry, all led to a greater need for workers to have periods away from the work environment and routine in order to recuperate and benefit from "recreation", literally the re-creation of physical and mental productive capacities. The improvements in working conditions, which are directly influential on the quality and quantity of leisure, have come about because of the level of workplace organisation of union members and class-solidarity over a long century of continuous change in the balance in industrial relations.

It is important to realise that for most of the period under discussion tourism and holidaymaking were confined to a minority of workers in most areas of England, apart from the Lancashire cotton towns. For the majority of poorer workers, the nearest thing to a holiday they were likely to experience would have been the work's outing or the Sunday School Treat. Even the pre-war peak in 1937 of almost fifteen million people taking a holiday of several days away from home indicates that two-thirds of the working population stayed at home.[44] What has been described in this work is the process of how the activities of a minority of organised workers spread to become a near universal expectation, if not an annual reality, over the course of a century. The holiday industry has had to develop according to working-class taste and culture, often to the dismay of middle-class observers and the more "respectable" artisans and socialists. The industry has become part of an urban industrial working-class culture and is not an imitation of upper and middle-class leisure and travel experiences.

The working class and its organisations clearly played a major role in the innovative stages of tourism

development. Savings clubs, collective enforcement of holidays, campaigns for paid leave, holiday camps and travel organisations were all initiated by working-class and trade union activity. Popular as they were amongst participants, limited resources prevented these largely voluntary efforts from ever being accessible to any but a minority of workers. Early efforts were thanks to the commitment of voluntary effort. Those who collected the subscriptions and organised the trips to London for the Great Exhibition had full-time jobs to do as well. This was a one-off event, although future exhibition trips, even as far away as Paris, were made. The initiators were not making a long-term commitment, despite the massive numbers of people involved.

Holiday camps were pioneered by socialists and trade unionists. Providing holidays, though, was not the main function of trade unions and even when demand exceeded supply further camps were not opened to capitalise on market-growth as this was not part of the organisation's objectives. As non-profit making bodies, they had no motive to extend provision and as custodians of members' money raised through subscriptions, no risk of over-extending resources could be taken. Many members would have been critical of funds being diverted to holiday camps when the purpose of trade unionism was to campaign and fight for better living and working conditions through combining against employers. Providing holidays was a diversion from the real task of a workers' organisation. In 1950, the local government officers' representative, John Warren, had declared the premise `that trade unionism was NALGO's paramount objective'.[45] In response to a conference decision in 1962, calling for "virile and dynamic trade unionism" and faced with a

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[44] Planning, PEP, op cit, p3

[45] Alec Spoor, "White Collar Union - 60 Years of NALGO", London, 1967, p484

financial deficit of £17,000, the NEC appointed an economy sub-committee to look at ways of making savings.[46] This committee decided to abolish the holiday centre and continental tours on the grounds that they were used by relatively few members and did not meet the test statement, "did it help to make for a more effective trade union?"[47]

Later organisations set up specifically to organise and provide holidays for people with low incomes, were not limited by the same constraints as trade unions. Unions had to contend with constitutions and articles of association restricting the type of activities in which non-profit making bodies could be engaged, as well as conference decisions made by activists that determined policy. The Workers' Travel Association (WTA), Holiday Fellowship and Co-operative Holiday Association constitutions allowed them to develop and expand holiday provision but although nominally and explicitly labour movement oriented they could not be involved in party political activity.

The WTA was to become, by the late 1930s, the biggest provider of holidays at home and abroad devised and promoted explicitly for working people. This gave opportunities for travel and holidays to people who might not otherwise have taken part in tourism of the kind provided. The WTA was particularly innovative in its provision of overseas and cruise holidays. Even this success was often criticised as the growth of the organisations inevitably led to a more impersonal service and the consequent decline in the camaraderie they aimed to foster and promote. The WTA continued until 1961 when it was taken over by the Co-operative Travel Agency. The

[46] Ibid

[47] Ibid

organisation had already been forced to change its name, altering it to Galleon Travel, after its logo depicting a ship in full sail. This was because of a new customer reluctance to be associated with a name some of them felt to be stigmatising in some way, as if the description worker was somehow degrading. Finance left over after the transfer to the Co-op remains in a trust fund called the Galleon Trust, which is an organisation dedicated to providing holidays for needy families.[48]

A need for affordable holidays was identified by the pioneering organisations in working-class tourism. Although they could not meet the massive potential demand, the pioneers provided the inspiration for commercial imitators, beginning with the Mechanics' Institute excursions that influenced Thomas Cook. The workers' travel clubs, which organised the earliest package holidays to the Great Exhibition, incorporated all the features of modern inclusive tour operation. The pioneer holiday camps were imitated and further developed by the commercial camp operators. Travel organisations such as the Holiday Fellowship and Co-operative Holiday Association were also copied by later profit motivated ones.

The biggest contribution made by workers in the growth of mass tourism was the fight for paid holidays. From their beginnings for only a very few workers in the exceptional circumstances of the Great Exhibition, which had no real permanent impact on holidays with pay, there gradually developed a steady trickle of manual workers off on paid holidays by the sea, starting initially with those in the municipal and public service sectors. Municipal workers and their families were joined by those who had made

[48] Letter from Colin Doyle, Project Manager, Employment and corporate Affairs, Co-operative Wholesale Society Ltd, 16 May 1990

their own financial provision for their holidays, notably the textile workers of the north west of England. Social change, escalated by World War One, was coupled in the immediate post-war years by a change in the balance of class forces in favour of the workers for a very short time. During the first year of peace, deferred wage and conditions settlements meant that the unions in the best organised trades such as printing were able to secure holidays with pay as part of their negotiations with employers.[49] The post-war industrial boom which benefited the most organised workers in terms of paid holidays was short-lived and the less fortunate majority had to wait until the 1930s or even the coming into effect of the Holidays with Pay Act after the next war.

From negligible growth through the 1920s and early 1930s, increased confidence as firms started to take on more workers at the end of the depression in the traditional staple industries, meant that workers were once more able to add holidays with pay to their list of demands in the negotiating rounds with employers. Numbers enjoying paid holidays increased rapidly during the latter years of the 1930s, there were up to three million of them in 1937.[50] Although fifteen million people took a holiday in that year, this constituted only about a third of the population. Even so in 1938 there were still eleven million with no entitlement to paid leave.[51] The Select Committee investigating holidays with pay acted as a spur to further voluntary agreements between workers and employers anxious to avoid any compulsion that might arise from its recommendations. By the outbreak of World

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[49] A E Musson, The Typographical Associaiton - Origins and History up to 1954, London, 1954, p163

[50] Donald Chapman, Holidays and the State, Fabian Society Pamphlet, 1949, p6

[51] Ibid

War Two the total estimate was that there were eleven million workers receiving holidays with pay although the war delayed any further advances due to the Holidays with Pay Act. Even so, by 1945, eighty per cent of all workers were entitled to a paid break with the number still rising. However, this did not mean that they could actually afford to go away on holiday.[52]

During the first half of the twentieth century it became more acceptable for the state to become involved in aspects of life which formerly were left to private individual arrangements. Starting with Old Age Pensions in 1911, there was increasing intervention by the government in all aspects of social provision through the national insurance scheme and other initiatives.[53] The exigencies of war time also led to more state involvement in production and industry. By the time of the Amulree Report from the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay in 1938, it was acknowledged that the state could become involved in social and industrial matters. In the context of holidays with pay, employers were not so keen on state interference and argued in defence of free collective bargaining over this matter. Representatives of trades unions giving evidence before the Committee pointed out that this must be the only instance of employers being in favour of strikes because strikes would be inevitable if the matter were left to free collective bargaining as the employers would be reluctant to concede improvements in conditions without a fight.[54] Industrial relations had long been subject to legislation

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[52] Ibid

[53] M J Daunton, Payment and Participation: Welfare and State Formation in Britain 1900-1951, Past and Present, No 154, February 1996, pp169-216, pp181-187

[54] Minutes of Evidence of the Select Committee on Holidays with Pay, p401, para 5179

but this had previously been confined to maximum working hours, trade unions and industrial disputes. Legislation regarding payment for holidays was a new venture into arrangements that had previously been left up to individual industries or workers to sort out.

Although the benefits of the Holidays with Pay Act were not fully realised until after the war, there was concern throughout the early 1940s amongst those planning for peace time. A massive surge in pre-war figures for the number of people heading for the sea was predicted. Wartime requisitions of holiday accommodation and camps meant that there were actually less places available for all the additional visitors to stay than in the previous decade.[55] In 1948, 20,900,000 people took a holiday by the sea or in the country, while another four million took other types of holiday in towns or abroad, making a total of 24,900,000 holidaymakers, about fifty-six per cent of the population. Another 4.9 million people went on day trips but 14.7 million still had no holiday of any kind.[56] These figures show that during the decade, even with the intervening war years, there had been a dramatic increase in numbers on the fifteen million people of 1937 taking holidays away from home.

The urge to travel after the war led, in 1950, to a million Britons going abroad. The Berlin airlift created spare aviation capacity in its aftermath that enabled working people to take part in overseas holidays by air, in large numbers for the first time. The hire of a thirty-two seater Dakota cost just two shillings and sixpence a mile, facilitating cheaper package holidays to the Continent. Horizon Holidays began when Vladimir

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[55] Planning - A Broadsheet isssued by PEP (Political and Economic Planning), no 194, 13 October, 1942

[56] Chapman, op cit, p7

Raitz, a Reuter's journalist, chartered a plane and organised a "package" tour to Corsica for two weeks. Included for thirty-five pounds ten shillings with the cost of the flights was tent accommodation,[57] still not cheap by 1950 standards but nevertheless the beginning of commercial mass tourism abroad by air. This enterprise, though a private initiative, followed the example of the pioneering achievements of workers over more than a century of collaborative endeavour to gain affordable holidays.

All the features of Horizon Holidays had already been developed and would have been familiar to many members of organisations of the working class. The chartering of vehicles for transport was first undertaken in the early days of the railways, notably by Mechanics Institutes and Friendly Societies in the 1840s. Holidays inclusive of travel and accommodation, the services of a guide, excursions and some entertainment had been developed by the Great Exhibition travel clubs in 1851. Camaraderie, fostered by life in tents and chalets, had been initiated in the early years of the twentieth century at the holiday camps of the socialists and trade unions. Overseas travel for workers had been pioneered by worker excursionists to exhibitions in Paris in the 1850s and 1860s and later by the Workers' Travel Association.

None of the features of Horizon Holidays nor those of other commercial tour operators were new. It was the investment by private entrepreneurs of the capital that workers' organisations lacked that was different. Seeing the popularity and success of workers' holidays and the potential demand triggered by the implementation of the Holidays with Pay Act, businessmen were inspired to

[57] Piers Brendon, Thomas Cook - 150 Years of Popular Tourism, London, 1996, p283

emulate the schemes of workers for private gain. Even this was only possible because of the workers' and trade unions' fight for paid holidays and then for adequate wages to pay to actually go away on holiday.

In 1937, the year before the passing of the Holidays with Pay Act, four million insured workers received paid holidays but it is believed fifteen million people took a holiday away from home, out of a population of about forty-six million. By the end of World War Two it was predicted that the holidays-with-pay figure would stand at fifteen million, an increase of eleven million on the pre-war figure. Based on an assumption that this increase would be spread across the whole employable age range from fifteen to sixty-five, they, together with their dependants, would probably have represented twenty-two million people, according to contemporary estimates.[58] Even assuming that only half of those newly paid workers and their dependants would actually have gone away on holiday, the fifteen million holiday makers of 1937 would, as a conservative estimate, have increased to twenty-six million. This doubled demand would have happened at a time when the available supply of accommodation was only likely to be seventy-five per cent of what it was before the war due to requisitioning and billeting.[59]

This estimate was only a little exaggerated as by 1951 the figure representing holidaymakers had indeed risen to nearly twenty-five million, about half of the people in Britain. This represented a fifteen per cent increase from thirty-five per cent of the population going away in 1937. By 1951 the total entitled to two weeks' paid

[58] Holidays - A Study made by the National Council of social Service, Oxford University Press, 1945, p3

[59] Ibid

annual leave was sixty-six per cent, with twenty-eight per cent receiving just one week.[60]

8.4 Building on the Foundations of Holidays with Pay

To emphasise the continuity of this growth in holidaymaking, by 1970 the numbers entitled to two weeks' holiday had declined to forty-one per cent due to an increase to fifty-two per cent of workers receiving three weeks paid holiday. This trend continued and by 1980, thirty-four per cent had between three and four weeks leave; forty-two per cent had four weeks; twenty-one per cent between four and five weeks. This rose to sixty-one per cent in 1984 with nineteen per cent entitled to five weeks.[61]

Despite these increases in holiday entitlement, surprisingly the numbers actually taking holidays away from home has remained relatively static throughout the period since the holidays with pay legislation. The total of people taking holidays in 1970 was 34.5 million or sixty per cent. In this year thirteen per cent managed to take more than one holiday away from home. The total number of holidaymakers rose to a peak of 38 million or sixty-eight per cent in 1976 which then fell to 33 to 34 millions by the early 1980s - between fifty-nine and sixty-one per cent of the British population.[62] Even at the end of the twentieth century, sixty years

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[60] Alan Dunn, Changes in Holiday Accommodation in the English Riviera Since the Second World War, University of Leicester, 1986, unpublished dissertation, Social and Economic History, pp9-10. Figures from Employment Gazette.

[61] Alan Dunn, ibid, p9

[62] Insights - The Tourism Marketing Intelligence Service 1997/98, British Tourism Authority/English Tourist Board, July 1997

since the passing of the Act, the proportion of holidaymakers compared with non-holiday takers has remained at around sixty per cent and forty per cent. The percentage having at least one holiday of four or more nights was sixty-one per cent in both 1984 and 1995, thirty-nine per cent of people having no holiday away at all. This total decreased slightly in 1996 to fifty-eight per cent having a holiday and forty-two per cent having none at all. Where there is an evident growth over the last decades of the twentieth century is in the continuing expansion of holidays abroad. In 1984 twenty-four per cent of British adults took a holiday abroad. This figure had increased to thirty-five per cent in 1995 with a slight decline to thirty-two per cent in 1996. In contrast the proportion staying in Britain had fallen correspondingly by eight per cent over the twelve year period.[63] These statistics do not show the social class of tourists but, because the recent figures are so high, they must include a large proportion of working-class travellers.

Where there has also been remarkable recent growth is in the numbers taking more than one holiday. This figure doubled between 1976 (10%) and 1982 (21%). What these figures show is that although about sixty per cent of people have the ability to take a holiday and twenty per cent of people manage more than one, there is still a substantial minority of about forty per cent who do not take a holiday at all. The statement that about sixty per cent of the British population have a holiday and approximately forty per cent do not, has remained true since 1939, the first year after the Holidays with Pay Act was passed. It was also true in 1970, 1984 and 1996. Even with paid holidays and increasing expectations and standards of living, there are still many people who are

[63] Insights, ibid

unable to take a break away from home. In 1939, a British Institute of Public Opinion survey showed that forty-one per cent of the sample was unable to afford a week away from home, very little difference to nearly sixty years later. When the statistics relating to those on low incomes of less than four pounds a week in 1939 were analysed, sixty-five per cent of them were unable to afford a holiday.[64] The widespread prevalence of holidays with pay and increases in the amount of holiday entitlement of workers in the late twentieth century has not overcome the problems of low pay, unemployment and poverty. These are often associated with the demographic life cycle. It is still low income, that despite over a century of struggle and reforms, remains the greatest barrier to working-class holidaymaking. This means that whether employees are able to take a holiday away from home or not is still a trade union issue.

[64] Planning, PEP, op cit, p3

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